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# The Influence of the Idea of Progress on the Curriculum Theories of Experimentalism, Essentialism, and Reconstructionism

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# THE INFLUENCE OF THE IDEA OF PROGRESS ON THE CURRICULUM THEORIES OF EXPERIMENTALISM, ESSENTIALISM, AND RECONSTRUCTIONISM

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by

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APPROVAL

This is to certify that the Advanced Graduate Committee of

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met on the

27th day of May, 19 75.

The commiteee read and examined his dissertation, supervised his defense of it in an oral examination, and decided to recommend that his study be submitted to the Graduate Council and the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Education.

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# Chapter 1

## INTRODUCTION

The idea of Progress was not a clear concept in the philosophical thought of the Middle Ages. For about one thousand years, from the fourth through the fourteenth centuries, the concept that man could be the planner and director of his own social progress and destiny was not considered. During this long period, philosophic ideas depicted a static universe and, consequently, a static society.

In the period of the Renaissance, philosophers directed their attention to observing the world in which they lived; and, consequently, it was during this age that the roots of modern science and philosophy had their origins.

As man directed his thoughts away from the religious-oriented, spiritual world of the Middle Ages and began looking at himself and society, the idea of Progress began to evolve.

Once the idea of Progress entered the thought patterns of men, it went through an historical development of three stages.

During the first stage, from the Renaissance up to the French Revolution, a period of approximately five hundred years, the idea of Progress was treated in a casual fashion; it was taken for granted and received no searching examination from philosophers or historians. In the second stage its immense significance was apprehended and a search began for a general law which would define and establish it. It was

the theory of biologic evolution that led to the third stage of the idea of Progress.[1]

Darwin's Origin of Species finished the work of Copernicus' heliocentric astronomy and completely removed man from a central or privileged position in the universe and threw him back on his own efforts.[2]

The idea of Progress was a concept that involved a synthesis of the past and a prophecy for the future. It was based on an interpretation of history that regarded man as slowly advancing in a definite and desirable direction and inferred that progress would continue indefinitely.[3]

A further implication of the idea of Progress was that progress must be the necessary outcome of the psychic and social nature of man; it must not be at the mercy of any external will, otherwise there would be no guarantee of its continuance and the idea of Progress would lapse into the idea of Providence.

According to R. Freeman Butts, the idea of Progress led to the concept that:

> The world of man and of nature could not only be understood by acquiring knowledge, it could be controlled, managed, and improved by taking thought and applying the resources of reason and knowledge to the task. This faith in knowledge--and thus in education--was of the essence of modernity. Of all the sources of social power upon which western civilization drew as it moved from tradition to modernity this was the fountain that nourished, or the lamp that illumined the others.[4]

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[1]J. B. Bury, The Idea of Progress (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1932), p. 334.

[2]Ibid., p. 335. [3]Ibid.

[4]R. Freeman Butts, The Education of the West (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1973), p. 311.

Thus, as the intellectual darkness of the Middle Ages gave way to the rational thought, skepticism, desire to learn and change that characterized the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century, the ingredients of the idea of Progress were at hand. Western man had begun to comprehend that much of his own destiny was controllable through applications of science and enlightened philosophical thinking. Everywhere the supposedly static, fate-controlled world was giving way to material progress. The medieval thoughts of the scholastics fell prey to the skeptics who recognized the progress they saw as the creations of men. No end to progress was in sight. This led to a whole new set of assumptions that undermined medieval metaphysics with the new reality of progress.

## THE PROBLEM

### Statement of the Problem

Did the idea or Progress, which developed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, influence the origins and curriculum theories of the educational philosophies of Experimentalism, Essentialism, and Reconstructionism?

### Statement of the Subproblems

1. Are the intellectual antecedents of the founders of the educational philosophies of Experimentalism, Essentialism, and Reconstructionism related?

2. Are there similarities in the ideas concerning the type of society that should exist represented by these three educational philosophies?

3. Are the social goals, the point that society should continue to strive for, related in these philosophies of education?

4. Do these educational philosophies reflect the importance of education and the school curriculum in furthering the continued social progress of mankind?

## IMPORTANCE OF THE PROBLEM

1. A review of the theoretical antecedents of curriculum development reveals that there is a need for historical research in the field. The lack of research has led to a situation whereby each new generation of curriculum workers has attempted to answer continuing and recurring questions with little regard for their historical antecedents.[5] This study of origins of curriculum theories should help to fill the void.

2. The nature of curriculum decisions made by groups of teachers indicates a lack of consistency between the philosophical concepts employed and the curricula produced.[6] Establishing the philosophical origins of certain dominant twentieth-century curriculum theories should help to alleviate this problem.

3. There has been an emphasis in recent educational writings on the concepts of progress, change, and purpose. Such statements as, "In education as in other affairs, man's purpose is to move forward

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[5]Gerald A. Ponder, "The Curriculum: Field Without a Past?" Educational Leadership, XXXI (February, 1974), 461.

[6]Gerald M. Reagan and Richard N. Pratte, "An Understanding of Schools: An Aspect of Teacher Competence," Theory into Practice, XII (February, 1973), 3.

and upward. . . ."[7] are common, but the theories underlying progress, change and purpose are only vaguely apparent in the processes undertaken to bring these things about. This study reports the origins of the idea of Progress so that educators can better understand the implications of educational ideas dealing with change and progress.

## ASSUMPTIONS

1. The idea or Progress was the concept that provided the foundation upon which the educational philosophies of Experimentalism, Essentialism, and Reconstructionism were built.

2. The curriculum theories that developed from these educational philosophies were based on the idea of Progress and were designed to perpetuate the concept that man could be the director of his own social evolution.

3. The social aims and goals that developed from these educational philosophies and curriculum theories were similar because they were based on the idea of Progress.

## LIMITATIONS

This study was limited to a consideration of the idea of Progress that developed in the Western world during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and how this idea influenced the development of the educational philosophies and curriculum theories of Experimentalism, Essentialism, and Reconstructionism during the twentieth century.

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[7]Ronald C. Doll, Curriculum Improvement: Decision Making and Process (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1970), p. 3.

## PROCEDURES

The procedures used in the study were as follows:

1. A search for related works was conducted in Dissertation Abstracts, Encyclopedia of Educational Research, Readers Guide to Periodic Literature, and Education Index.

2. A search of the card catalog was conducted for primary and secondary sources related to nineteenth century philosophical development. These works were used to support the contention that the prevailing philosophic climate of the times was deeply influenced by the idea of Progress.

The greatest emphasis was placed on primary philosophic works. Secondary works were used as a framework to support the contention that the idea of Progress dominated philosophic thought during the nineteenth century.

3. A search was conducted of the primary and secondary works of: (1) Friedrich Hegel, (2) Auguste Comte, (3) Charles Darwin, (4) Lester F. Ward, (5) Edward Bellamy, (6) Henri Bergson, (7) John Dewey, (8) George Counts, (9) Harold Rugg, (10) Theodore Brameld, (11) William T. Harris, (12) Michael Demiashkevich, (13) William C. Bagley as major contributors to the problem of how the idea of Progress influenced American educational philosophy and curriculum theory.

The primary works were used to determine if the intellectual antecedents of the founders of the educational philosophies of Experimentalism, Essentialism, and Reconstructionism were similar.

These works were further used to determine if because of the influence of the idea of Progress there were similarities in the ideas

concerning the type of society and social goals represented by the works of the founders of these three educational philosophies.

The primary works were used to determine if these educational philosophies reflected the importance of education and the school curriculum in furthering the continued social progress of mankind.

The secondary sources in this study were used only as help to provide the framework of the study. The major emphasis was on primary sources as materials in which philosophic relationships, social ideas, and curriculum theories were shown in relation to the idea of Progress.

## ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

The study is divided into seven chapters. Chapter 1 includes the introduction, the statement of the problem and four subproblems, importance, assumptions, limitations, procedures, and the organization of the study.

Chapter 2 contains the review of related literature, and presents the historical development of the idea of Progress, starting with Sumerian thought and ending with the eighteenth century. In this chapter the development of the idea of Progress is traced through each of the major periods of Western thought to show that the idea of Progress did not begin to develop until the Renaissance, and finally took form during the period of the Enlightenment. The personalities selected to introduce the idea of Progress are central figures that influenced the growth of the ideas of the founders of the educational philosophies of Experimentalism, Reconstructionism, and Essentialism.

The third chapter presents the major currents of nineteenth century thought as they related to the idea of Progress and presents the ideas of Friedrich Hegel, Auguste Comte, Henri Bergson, Lester F. Ward, Charles Darwin, and Edward Bellamy as the seminal thinkers philosophically influenced by the idea of Progress.

Chapter 4 contains the origin and development of the educational philosophy of Experimentalism founded by John Dewey. The chapter is divided into four sections: the first section presents the antecedents of Dewey's philosophical thinking, the second presents Dewey's social philosophy, the third presents the social goals for which Dewey thought a society should strive, the fourth and final section presents Dewey's concept of curriculum and how this curriculum concept would influence the continued progress of man. The chapter is designed to show that the idea of Progress was the major concept that influenced both the origin and curriculum theory of the educational philosophy of Experimentalism.

Chapter 5 presents the educational philosophy of Reconstructionism. The chapter is designed as was Chapter 4: (1) intellectual antecedents of the founders, (2) social philosophy, (3) social goals, and (4) curriculum theory. As Chapter 4 illustrates the influence of the idea of Progress in Experimentalism, Chapter 5 illustrates its influence in Reconstructionism.

Chapter 6 presents the origin and development of the educational philosophy of Essentialism founded by William C. Bagley. The four sections of the chapter: (1) intellectual antecedents, (2) social philosophy, (3) social goals, and (4) curriculum theory are used to indicate that the idea of Progress was basic to the origin

and curriculum theory of the educational philosophy of Essentialism.

The seventh chapter presents the summary and findings of the study. This chapter is designed to answer each of the questions presented in the statement of the problem and subproblems and to support the stated assumptions.

## Chapter 2

## REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

### INTRODUCTION

The idea of Progress, the philosophical notion that mankind can and should improve its own material and social condition is of comparatively recent origin.[1] Prior to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, it was thought that man and nature were much the same throughout the ages, both moving in a cycle about a standard mean.[2]

The idea that mankind had degenerated was prominent in both Greek and Roman thought. This idea was given added force by the Christian doctrine of the Fall of Man.[3]

It was not until the rise of scientific thought associated with the philosophies of Francis Bacon, Jean Bodin, and René Descartes, during the age of Enlightenment, that the idea of Progress became dominant in the thought pattern of mankind.[4]

The idea of Progress, once it was established, became the foundational notion that supported the social and educational philosophies of the early part of the twentieth century. It was the idea of Progress that made serious inroads into the previous idea

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[1]J. B. Bury, The Idea of Progress (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1932), p. 6.

[2]S. F. Mason, Main Currents of Scientific Thought (New York: Abelard-Schuman, 1956), p. 251.

[3]Ibid., p. 252.

[4]Ibid., pp. 252-253.

of a Creator or God-directed force behind human history.[5]

## SUMERIAN THOUGHT

The Sumerians were a civilization of mixed people that inhabited the southern valleys of Mesopotamia, between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, around 4000 B.C.[6] These people saw their contemporary society as being a degenerative form of a past golden age. The idea that human society had been perfect in the beginning and had degenerated (the very opposite of the idea of Progress) was immensely popular. Not only did the early Sumerians share it, but it continued to obtain currency until the seventeenth century.[7]

### A Past Golden Age

The Sumerians thought of themselves as recipients of a glorious tradition. They originated the tale of man's golden age, seen by the following inscription taken from a Sumerian tablet:

> In those days there was no snake, there was no scorpion, there was no hyena, there was no lion, there was no wild dog, no wolf, there was no fear, no terror, man had no rival. In those days the land Shubur (East), the place of plenty, of righteous decrees, harmony-tongued Sumar (South), the great land of the decrees of princeship, 'Uri (North), the land having all that is needful, the land Martu (West), resting in security, the whole universe, the people in unison, to Enlis in one tongue gave praise.[8]

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[5]Ibid., p. 261.

[6]William H. McNeill, The Rise of the West (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), p. 29.

[7]George Sarton, A History of Science (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959), p. 96.

[8]Ibid., p. 96.

Man as Slave to the Gods

Along with the concept of a past golden age, the Sumerians also developed the theologic concept that man was a slave of the gods. According to William H. McNeill:

> Sumerian theology, as later recorded, held that men had been created expressly to free the gods from the necessity of working for a living. Man was thus considered to be a slave of the gods, obliged to serve ceaselessly and assiduously under pain or direct punishment--flood or drought and consequent starvation.[9]

This belief led to the development of a large priestly caste the duty of which was to act as mediators between the gods and their human slaves.[10] Such behavior was based on the assumption that the gods had to be cajoled and propitiated, lest they send flood or drought or disease, or raise up some murderous enemy against the people.[11]

Both of these ideas, the past golden age concept, and man as slave to the gods, became dominant ideas in later ages and did not encourage the development of the idea that man could be the director of his own social progress.[12]

## GREEK THOUGHT

Surprisingly the ancient Greeks, who were so rich in their speculations on human life, did not develop an idea of Progress.[13]

> The old legend of a "golden age" of simplicity, from which man had fallen away, was generally accepted as truth, and leading thinkers combined it with the doctrine of a gradual sequence of social and material improvements during the subsequent period of decline. We find the

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[9]McNeill, op. cit., p. 34.

[10]Ibid., p. 34.

[11]Ibid.

[12]Ibid., pp. 42-47.

[13]Bury, op. cit., p. 7.

> two views thus combined, for instance, in Plato's Laws, and in the earliest reasoned history of civilization written by Dicaearchus, a pupil of Aristotle.[14]

Change as Undesirable

According to William Ebenstein, Plato, the originator of the perfect state concept, as seen in his Republic, was deeply influenced by the idea of deterioration as the natural law of the universe. Plato anticipated the eventual decline of the best state and its degeneration into progressively lower types of constitutions.[15]

The Greeks believed in the ideal of an absolute order in society from which, when it was once established, any deviation would be for the worse.[16] Even Aristotle, with his teleological philosophy of progressive evolution, applied this idea to natural history rather than to human history.[17] Aristotle developed the idea that changes in an established social order were undesirable and should be as few and slight as possible.[18]

Moira as a Fixed Order

In Greek thought the idea of "fate" prevented the development of the idea of Progress:

> Moira (fate) meant a fixed order in the universe; as a fact to which men must bow, it had enough in common with fatality to demand a philosophy of resignation and to hinder the creation of an optimistic atmosphere of hope. It was this order which kept things in their place, assigned to each

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[14]Ibid., pp. 8-9.

[15]William Ebenstein, Great Political Thinkers (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1961), p. 11.

[16]Bury, The Idea of Progress, p. 11.

[17]Sarton, op. cit., p. 498.

[18]Bury, loc. cit.

> its proper sphere and function, and drew a definite line, for instance between men and gods. Human progress toward perfection--towards an ideal of omniscience, or an ideal of happiness, would have been a breaking down of the bars which divide the human from the divine. Human nature does not alter; it is fixed by Moira.[19]

The speculative Greek mind never hit upon the idea of Progress. Their limited history, and the concepts of degeneration, Moira and a general suspicion of change, suggested a view of the world which was the very antithesis of progressive development.[20]

## THE THOUGHT OF THE MIDDLE AGES

The dominant philosophy of the Middle Ages was incompatible with the idea of Progress.[21] A representative philosophy of the period was that of St. Augustine who saw the whole movement of history as the securing of the happiness of a small portion of the human race in another world.[22]

> For Augustine, as for any medieval believer, the course of history would be satisfactorily complete if the world came to an end in his own lifetime. He was not interested in the question whether any gradual amelioration of society or increase of knowledge would mark the period of time which might still remain to run before the day of Judgment. In Augustine's system the Christian era introduced the last period of history, the old age of humanity, which would endure only so long as to enable the Deity to gather in the predestined number of saved people.[23]

### Providence as Reality

The doctrine of Providence, defined as divine guidance, was tied to the doctrine of original sin. This combination presented

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[19]Ibid., p. 19. [20]Ibid.

[21]Ibid., p. 21. [22]Ibid. [23]Ibid.

insuperable obstacles to the idea of the amelioration of the race by any gradual process of development.[24]

Embryonic ideas concerning the relationships between science, philosophy, and progress first appeared in the works of the Franciscan Friar Roger Bacon during the Middle Ages.[25] He saw the road to knowledge not in logic or metaphysics but in experimentation and mathematics.[26]

> Bacon realized, as no man had done before him, the importance of the experimental method in investigating the secrets of nature, and was an almost solitary pioneer in the paths to which his greater namesake, more than three hundred years later, was to invite the attention of the world.[27]

Despite his eloquence on behalf of experimentation, Bacon was still a man of his age, and insisted upon the application of experimentation to the study of astrology:

> He maintained, like Thomas Aquinas, the physiological influence of the celestial bodies, and regarded the planets as signs telling us what God had decreed from eternity to come to pass either by natural processes or by an act of human will or directly at his own good pleasure.[28]

Bacon recognized the benefits of the scientific method in relation to the progress of knowledge and further recognized how man might use this knowledge in relation to a view of the future. He attached his whole theory to the concept of Providence, however, and believed that the scientific method was to be used to predict events that divine Providence had already decreed would take place.[29]

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[24]Ibid., p. 22. [25]Ibid., p. 24.

[26]Adolphe E. Meyer, An Educational History of the Western World (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1965), p. 116.

[27]Bury, op. cit., p. 26. [28]Ibid., p. 27. [29]Ibid.

The tenure of thought of the Greek and Medieval periods, as they related to the idea of Progress, was perhaps best stated by J. B. Bury when he said:

> The conceptions which were entertained of the working of divine Providence, the belief that the world, surprised like a sleeping household by a theif in the night, might at any moment come to a sudden end, had the same effect as the Greek theories of the nature of change and of recurring cycles of the world. Or rather, they had a more powerful effect, because they were not reasoned conclusions, but dogmas guaranteed by divine authority. And medieval pessimism as to man's mundane condition was darker and sterner than the pessimism of the Greeks. There was the prospect of happiness in another sphere to compensate, but this engrossing the imagination, only rendered it less likely that any one should think of speculating about man's destinies on earth.[30]

## THE THOUGHT OF THE RENAISSANCE

Europe spent about three hundred years passing from the mental atmosphere of the Middle Ages to that of the modern world.[31] This period of time has been called the Renaissance, and although this age did not give rise to the idea of Progress, it set the intellectual milieu in which the idea was born.[32]

### Roots of the Idea of Progress

The period of the Renaissance produced two important concepts related to the idea of Progress. Self-confidence was restored to human reason, and life on this planet was recognized as possessing a value independent of any hopes or fears connected with a life beyond the grave.[33]

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[30]Bury, The Idea of Progress, p. 29.

[31]Ibid.

[32]Ibid., p. 30.

[33]Ibid.

The early part of the Renaissance was dominated by the idea of looking back to ancient authorities for answers to social and philosophical questions. Nicolo Machiavelli accepted the Greek view that change was degeneration. He looked at the state of Rome as a golden age.[34]

Toward the latter part of the Renaissance, however, certain thinkers began somewhat timidly and tentatively to rebel against the tyranny of antiquity.[35] The rebellion was most obvious in the areas of scientific and philosophic thought:

> Copernicus undermined the authority of Ptolemy and his predecessors; the anatomical researches of Versalius injured the prestige of Galen and Aristotle was attacked on many sides by men like Bruno. In particular branches of science innovations had begun that heralded a radical revolution in the study of natural phenomena, though the general significance of the prospect which these researchers oped was but vaguely understood at the time. The thinkers and men of science were living in an intellectual dawn.[36]

Jean Bodin, the sixteenth century political philosopher, was one of the first of the modern thinkers to reject the ancient view of the degeneration of man and to present the history of man as a series of oscillations, with a general and gradual ascent.[37]

Bodin related his view of progress to the development of knowledge. He recognized the importance of the scientific discoveries of the ancients but thought the moderns had not only thrown new light on phenomena but had made new discoveries of equal or indeed greater importance.[38]

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[34]Ibid., p. 32.

[35]Ibid., p. 33.

[36]Ibid.

[37]Ibid., p. 36.

[38]Ibid., p. 40.

## THE AGE OF ENLIGHTENMENT

The works of Francis Bacon built upon the ideas of Jean Bodin. Bacon developed the idea that knowledge was the key to continued progress, and that experimentation was the key to discovering the secrets of nature.[39] He refined the idea of experimentation and then sounded a modern note; for him the end of knowledge was utility.[40]

### The Utility of Knowledge

The true object, therefore, of the investigation of nature was not, as the Greek philosophers had held, speculative satisfaction. Knowledge was to be used to establish the reign of man over nature. Bacon judged human progress to be attainable, provided new methods of attacking the problems were introduced.[41]

The ideas of René Descartes were built upon those of Jean Bodin and Francis Bacon:

> Cartesianism affirmed the two positive axioms of the supremacy of reason, and the invariability of the laws of nature; and its instrument was a new rigorous analytical method, which was applicable to history as well as to physical knowledge. The axioms had destructive corollaries. The immutability of the process of nature collided with the theory of an active Providence. The supremacy of reason shook the throne from which authority and tradition had tyrannized over the brains of men. Cartesianism was equivalent to a declaration of the Independence of Man.[42]

During the Enlightenment faith in the vincibility of ignorance arose. The philosophers of that period believed that reason and knowledge could be used to solve the problems of humanity. These

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[39]Bury, The Idea of Progress, p. 51. [40]Ibid.

[41]Ibid., p. 52. [42]Ibid., p. 65.

philosophers saw no grounds for doubting that knowledge could lead to progress and that this idea of Progress was to usher in a new age of continued progressive human development.[43]

## SUMMARY

The idea of Progress was a recent development in the philosophic thought of man. The roots of this idea developed during the period of the Renaissance, and came to maturity during the eighteenth century.

Before this time, as can be seen in Figure 1, philosophic concepts were dominated by the ideas of Providence and a fixed order to nature and society. Such ancient civilizations as the Sumerians and Greeks as well as the Western society of the Middle Ages did not develop an idea of Progress. They relied on the idea that a god or gods directed the movement of history.

It was not until man developed confidence in his own reason, and saw life on this planet as possessing a value in and of itself that the idea of Progress began to develop. Once the idea of Progress was established, however, it became the foundational idea that supported the philosophic movements of the nineteenth century.

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[43]Maurice Mandelbaum, History, Man, and Reason (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1971), p. 52.

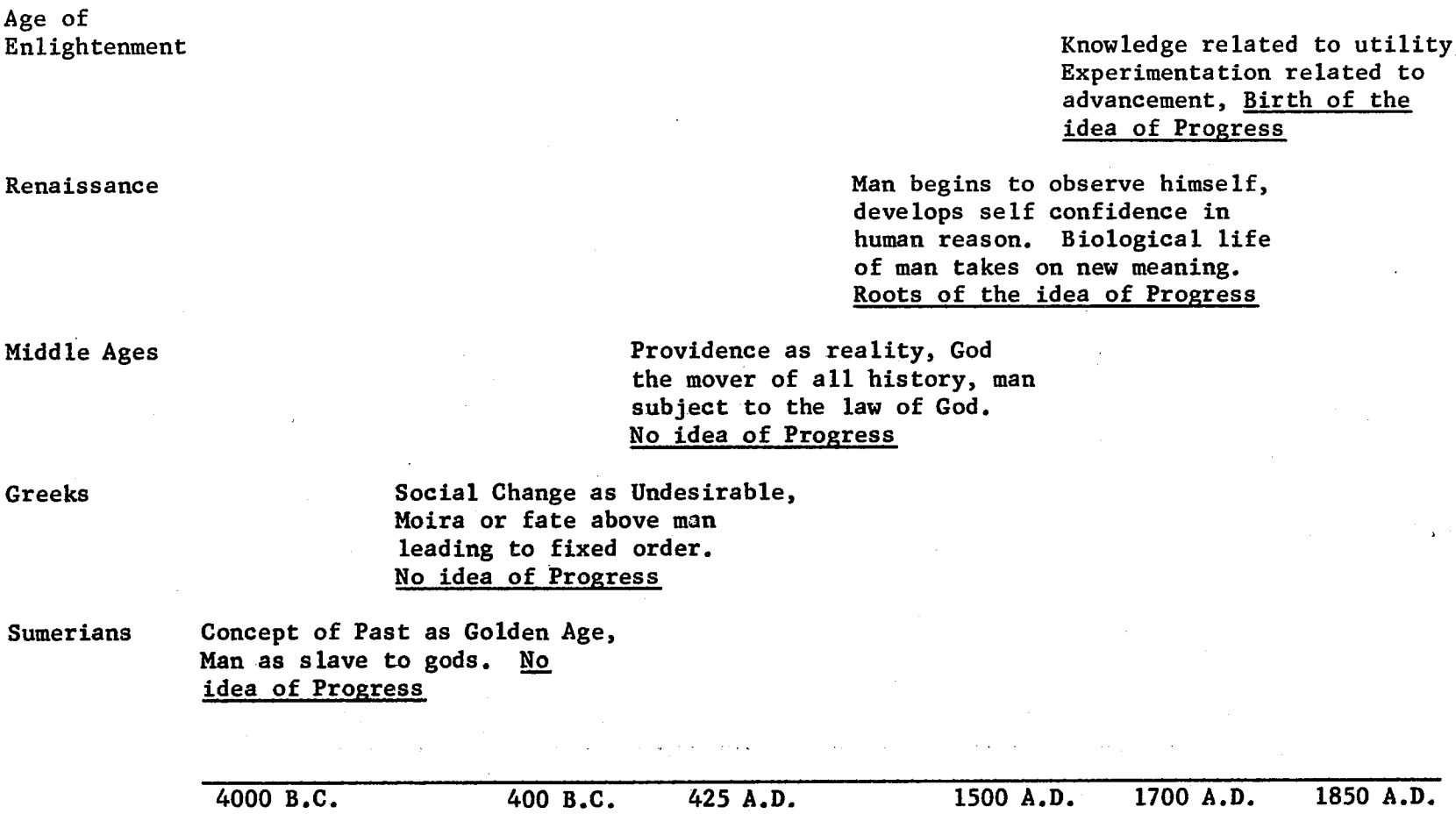


Figure 1

The Historical Development of the Idea of Progress

## Chapter 3

## THE IDEA OF PROGRESS IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

### INTRODUCTION

During the nineteenth century two concepts (1) historism and (2) the malleability of human nature, gave depth and meaning to the eighteenth century idea of Progress. When these concepts were blended with the idea of Progress, the synthesis provided the foundation for the major philosophic movements of the nineteenth century.[1]

Maurice Mandelbaum defined the concept of historism as:

> . . . the belief that an adequate understanding of the nature of any phenomenon and an adequate assessment of its value are to be gained through considering it in terms of the place which it occupied and the role which it played within a process of development.[2]

The concept of development, during the nineteenth century, involved the notion of change taking place in a specific direction, and more particularly it involved the view that what comes later in a process is an unfolding of what was at least implicitly present in the earlier stages of that process.[3] The concepts of development and historism were blended with the idea of Progress by philosophers of the nineteenth century who saw human history as having an inherent directional property:

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[1]Maurice Mandelbaum, History, Man, and Reason (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1971), p. 4.

[2]Ibid., p. 42.

[3]Ibid., p. 43.

> Such a directional property was not, however, simply a question of something succeeding what came earlier, but involved the belief that what was present in the earlier stages became more marked or more explicit in the later stages.[4]

The event that gave currency to this notion of development and the idea of Progress in human history was the French Revolution.[5] William Barrett, in the introduction to his anthology Philosophy in the Twentieth Century, wrote:

> . . . this (the French Revolution) was the first event in human history that revealed that a revolution did not mean merely the exchange of rulers, the beggar riding on horseback with the rider dashed to the ground, but that the whole fabric of human life could be completely transformed from top to bottom. The future thus took on a new dimension of contingency: it could mean that the life of man in that future might be radically different from what it had been in the past.[6]

The nineteenth century concept of the malleability of human nature was that there were no specific ways of thinking and acting which were so deeply entrenched in human nature that they could not be supplanted either by the effects of the circumstances in which humans were placed, or by means of human effort.[7]

The concepts of historism and the malleability of human nature when blended with the idea of Progress provided the foundation to the dominant philosophical movements of the nineteenth century, namely metaphysical idealism and positivism.[8]

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[4]Ibid., p. 44.

[5]William Barrett and Henry D. Aiken (eds.), Philosophy in the Twentieth Century, IV (New York: Random House, 1962), p. 454.

[6]Ibid., p. 455.

[7]Mandelbaum, op. cit., p. 141.

[8]Ibid., p. 5.

## METAPHYSICAL IDEALISM

The philosophy of metaphysical idealism was based on the conception of the organic nature of human social life, and explained change as being analogous to the growth of a living organism. The idealistic position further suggested that the various aspects of social life had to be conceived as related to one another, and to the growth of the whole, as the component parts of a living organism are related to one another and to that organism as a whole.[9]

The idea of Progress provided the basis from which idealistic philosophers viewed history as an unfolding of a single process that was not guided from without but proceeded according to a principle immanent within it. The process itself was the education of mankind and the agent that furnished the impetus to the process was man himself.[10] According to this idea, all periods and people could be placed in the continuing stream of human development toward higher achievements and praise or blame was assigned in accordance with the role that individual periods or persons played in the upward struggle of humanity.[11]

### Friedrich Hegel [1770-1831]

Friedrich Hegel was a German philosopher of the early nineteenth century. He was one of the supreme figures in the building of metaphysical idealism. Hegel used the concept of historism epitomized

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[9]Mandelbaum, History, Man, and Reason, p. 57.

[10]Ibid., p. 53.

[11]Ibid.

in his world spirit idea, to answer the problem of human destiny, and the meaning of human existence.[12]

His philosophy was based on the concepts of historism, development, the idea of Progress, and the organic nature of growth and change. These central themes, and their interrelatedness, were expressed by Hegel in Phenomenology of Mind when he stated:

> It is surely not difficult to see that our time is a time of birth and transition to a new period. The spirit has broken with what was hitherto the world of its existence and imagination, and is about to submerge all this in the past; it is at work giving itself a new form. To be sure, the spirit is never at rest but always engaged in ever progressing motion. But just as in the case of a child the first breath it draws after long silent nourishment terminates the gradualness of the merely quantitative progression--a qualitative leap--and now the child is born, so too, the spirit that educates itself matures slowly and quietly toward the new form, dissolving one particle of the edifice of its previous world after the other, while its tottering is suggested only by some symptoms here and there; frivolity as well as the boredom that open up in the establishment and the indeterminate apprehension of something unknown are harbingers of a forthcoming change. This gradual crumbling which did not alter the physiognomy of the whole is interrupted by the break of day that, like lightning, all at once reveals the edifice of the new world.[13]

The nineteenth century concept of the ever-upward march of history, and therefore of humanity, was expressed by Hegel in The Philosophy of History when he wrote:

> The abstract change which occurs in history has long since been interpreted in such a way as to contain a progression to the better, the more perfect. The changes in nature show only a cyclical movement. . . . Only in the changes which occur in the field of the spirit does the novel occur. This aspect of the life of the spirit long

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[12]Carl J. Friedrich (ed.), The Philosophy of Hegel, by Friedrich Hegel (New York: Random House, 1954), p. xvii.

[13]Friedrich Hegel, Phenomenology of Mind, Hegel: Texts and Commentary, trans., Walter Kaufman, cited by Maurice Mandelbaum, History, Man, and Reason (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1971), p. 4.

> ago led to seeing man as destined for something different than the merely natural things . . . a capacity for genuine change for the better, the more perfect, a drive toward perfection, as we have said.[14]

Hegel conceived that the progressive march of history went through three stages, each tending toward a greater freedom of man and, therefore, the world spirit:

> The first stage is the immediate one where . . . the spirit is embodied in naturalness, in which it is only in unfree isolation. . . . The second stage is that in which the spirit emerges into a consciousness of its freedom. But this first emergence is imperfect and partial; it emerges from the immediate naturalness, is related to it and hence is still affected by it as an aspect. The third stage is the rising from this particular freedom into the pure and general freedom; that is, the spirit rises to the self-confidence and self-consciousness of the essence of freedom.[15]

Although Hegel based his philosophy on the idea of the inherent march of history, through the "world spirit," to ever progressive stages of mankind this reliance did not negate the role played by man in bringing about this ever-progressive development.[16] The mind of man represented the world spirit conscious of its own being. Mankind, according to Hegel's thought, was not a passive bystander watching history move on but was an active agent in the process:

> This is the seal of man's high absolute destiny, that he knows what is good and evil and he can therefore will either the good or the evil--in short, that he can become guilty, guilty not of this or that or everything in which he is and which is in him but guilty of what belongs of his individual freedom, its good and evil. Only an animal is truly and completely innocent.[17]

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[14]Friedrich Hegel, The Philosophy of History, ed. Carl J. Friedrich, The Philosophy of Hegel (New York: Random House, 1954). p. 21.

[15]Ibid., p. 23.

[16]Ibid.

[17]Ibid., p. 19.

Humanity participated in this progressive movement by a knowledge of history and philosophy which led as Hegel said to ". . . the treasure of rational knowledge."[18] Thus, according to Hegel, humanity progressed by looking back, and then bringing forward the past added the present, and emerged the new and progressive:

> What we and the present world possess of self-conscious rationality is not . . . grown from the soil of the present; it is essentially a heritage and the result of the labor of all the preceding generations. . . . What we are in philosophy . . . we owe largely to tradition which binds with a sacred chain all that is past, and which has preserved and transmitted to us what the [spirit] has brought forward . . . .
>
> The content of this tradition is of a spiritual nature. This general spirit does not stand still. . . . The spirit of the world does not sink into indifferent rest. This is due to its basic nature. Its life is action. Such deed presupposes some existing material to which it is directed and which it shapes and remolds. Thus what each generation has brought forward as knowledge and spiritual creation, the next generation inherits. This inheritance constitutes its soul, its spiritual substance, something one has become accustomed to, its principles, its prejudices and its riches. . . . And since each generation has [its own] spiritual activity and vitality, it works upon what it has received and the material thus worked upon becomes richer. Our position is the same; to grasp the knowledge which is at hand, to appropriate it, and then to mold it. What we produce, presupposes something already there; what our philosophy is exists essentially only in such a context and has of necessity grown from it. History is what shows us our growth, the growth of our science, not the growth of something alien.[19]

By this mechanism progress was attained, man and society moved forward and philosophy or rational thought would ever move toward perfection, for as Hegel stated:

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[18]Friedrich Hegel, Lectures on the History of Philosophy, ed. Carl J. Friedrich, The Philosophy of Hegel (New York: Random House, 1954), p. 161.

[19]Friedrich Hegel, The History of Philosophy, ed. Carl J. Friedrich, The Philosophy of Hegel (New York: Random House, 1954), pp. 161-162.

> The truth so understood has a tendency to develop. Only the living, the spiritual moves, agitates within itself, develops itself. The idea is, therefore, concrete in itself and unfolding itself, an organic system, a totality, which contains a rich set of levels and aspects.
>
> Philosophy is the understanding of this development and is at the same time itself this thought development, since it is the thought which understands. The further this development has gone, the more perfect has philosophy become.[20]

Although Hegel was deeply influenced by the idea of Progress, and saw history as an ever-progressive movement toward a perfection of rational thought, he was profoundly convinced that all he could adequately comprise within his thought was what was past. The very central role that <u>becoming</u> occupied in his philosophy meant that he could only know that which <u>had</u> unfolded, not that which might yet come.[21]

To Hegel the future, other than the fact that it was to be more perfect than the past, was unpredictable for who could tell how in the future man might restructure the past, what he might add from the present and what new directions might emerge. Hegel was convinced, however, that if humanity followed the means of philosophic thought progress was guaranteed. It was this formulation that provided the basis for the educational ideas of Hegel.[22]

## <u>Hegel and Education</u>

Hegel viewed education as a mechanism to facilitate <u>becoming</u>, to raise the mind from its immature state to a mature state, so that

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[20]Ibid., p. 164.

[21]Friedrich, op. cit., p. xvii.

[22]Ibid.

the individual mind progressed to the position of seeing ". . . that the world is one infinite organic whole, whose creative principle is absolute. . . ."[23]

In relation to this Hegel said:

> The necessity for education is present in children as their own feeling of dissatisfaction with themselves as they are, as the desire to belong to the adult world whose superiority they divine, as the longing to grow up. The play theory of education assumes that what is childish is itself already something of inherent worth and presents it as such to the children; in their eyes it lowers serious pursuits, and education itself, to a form of childishness for which the children themselves have scant respect.[24]

The formal educational curriculum was to concentrate upon (1) art that, ". . . included drawing, music and literature."[25] (2) religion restricted to, ". . . the ethical aspects. . . ."[26] and (3) philosophy viewed as the, ". . . effort made by the human intelligence to grasp together all objects of the Real World as constituting at the same time the objects of the Rational World."[27]

Within the Hegelian system the process of education was one in which the teacher, presupposed to be a great scholar, led the immature mind to the best of what man had produced.[28]

The Hegelian philosophic system was based on the concept of the organic growth of society and the perfection of rational thought, while the positivistic philosophy that had grown from the same seed

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[23]William M. Bryant, Hegel's Educational Ideas (New York: Werner School Book Company, 1896), p. 21.

[24]Friedrich Hegel, The Philosophy of Right, iii, 61.

[25]Bryant, op. cit., p. 205. [26]Ibid., p. 209.

[27]Ibid., p. 210.

[28]Ibid., pp. 210-211.

as idealism; that being the idea of Progress, emphasized the isolation and application by man of specific social laws to give progressive direction to the growth of society.[29]

## METAPHYSICAL POSITIVISM

Metaphysical positivism was based on a continuation of the intellectual traditions of the Enlightenment and on that basis the positivistic philosophers sought to establish a science of social development.[30] Like metaphysical idealism the positivistic train of thought was based on the concept of developmental necessitarianism related to the notions of historism and the malleability of human nature that had been blended with the idea of Progress.[31]

The contrast between these two philosophic positions was that (1) the positivistic philosophy rejected the organic view of society that was held by idealism, (2) the positivists had a definite determination to isolate and establish laws of social development that would give specific direction to social progress whereas the idealists rejected the concept of specific social direction.[32]

The first major representative of the positivistic position was Claude Henri de Saint-Simon.[33] Saint-Simon, in contrast to Hegel, was an espoused materialist and an adherent to the mechanical view of reality related to the Newtonian concept of the universe. His social thought included three major ideas: (1) human history had progressed

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[29]Mandelbaum, op. cit., pp. 63-64.

[30]Ibid., p. 63.

[31]Ibid., p. 64.

[32]Ibid., pp. 62-64.

[33]Ibid., p. 63.

from a theological to a metaphysical stage and then to a positive or genuinely scientific stage, (2) all things including social development were governed by laws of nature, and (3) the understanding and application by humanity of these laws would bring about social reform and therefore progress.[34]

Although it was Saint-Simon who initiated the thought of positivism it was his secretary Auguste Comte who systematized the philosophy into a rigorous analytic position.[35]

Auguste Comte [1798-1857]

In 1817, Comte was appointed secretary to Saint-Simon and for the next seventeen years served as his intellectual intimate. That period of association, when Saint-Simon was at the crest of his fame and his influence, was vastly important to Comte's self-education and to his developing views.[36]

In his works on positivistic philosophy, Comte had two major objectives: (1) he intended to put theology, metaphysics, and science in their proper places and to analyze the relationship among the basic sciences themselves, (2) to examine the implications and consequences associated with political and religious institutions that would flow from the basic changes that a positivist philosophy would bring about.[37]

The influence that the idea of Progress, with its related concepts of historism, development, and natural law had upon Comte,

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[34]Ibid., p. 64.

[35]Frederick Ferré (trans.), Introduction to Positive Philosophy, by Auguste Comte (n.p.: The Library of Liberal Arts: Bobbs-Merrill, n.d.), p. viii.

[36]Ibid.

[37]Ibid., p. ix.

was apparent from his opening statement in Positive Philosophy:

> In order to explain properly the true nature and peculiar character of the positive philosophy, it is indispensable that we should first take a brief survey of the progressive growth of the human mind viewed as a whole; for no idea can be properly understood apart from its history. . . . I believe that I have discovered a great fundamental law, to which the mind is subjected by an invariable necessity. The truth of this law can, I think, be demonstrated both by reasoned proofs furnished by knowledge of our mental organization, and by historical verification due to an attentive study of the past.[38]

As his predecessor Saint-Simon had done, Comte viewed the history of human mental development as having gone through three stages. These stages were: (1) the theological stage in which the human mind directed its researches mainly toward the inner nature of being or a search for absolute truth, (2) the metaphysical state, that was actually a transitional method or mental procedure, that replaced supernatural agents with abstract forces but still sought absolute truth, and finally (3) the positive state in which the quest for absolute truth was abandoned.[39]

Comte described the positive state of development as the state in which:

> . . . the human mind, recognizing the impossibility of obtaining absolute truth, gives up the search after the origin and hidden causes of the universe and a knowledge of the final causes of phenomena. It endeavours now only to discover, by a well-combined use of reasoning and observation, the actual laws of phenomena--that is to say, their invariable relations of succession and likeness. The explanation of facts, thus reduced to its real terms, consists henceforth only in the connection established between different particular phenomena and some general facts, the number of which the progress of science tends more and more to diminish.[40]

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[38]Ibid., p. 1.

[39]Ibid., p. 2.

[40]Ibid.

According to Comte it was the positivistic stage of human development that would continue the progressive development of society, and the development would continue because the nature of man was malleable. Comte said:

> Taking then, this point of view, we may say that the one great object of life, personal and social, is to become more perfect in every way; in our external condition first, but also and more especially, in our own nature.[41]

Comte, like Hegel, was convinced that the history of mental development represented a progressive movement toward perfection, but unlike Hegel, who had put his emphasis upon philosophical and rational knowledge, Comte looked toward scientific knowledge and method as the means that guaranteed the continuation of progress. And as Hegel had committed himself only to a general view of what the future would be, Comte by virtue of the positive philosophy had definite views concerning the direction social development should take.[42]

## Progress and the Benefits of the Positive Philosophy

Comte saw the benefits of the positivistic stage of development as being three in number, the first great benefit was:

> . . . the manifestation by experience of the laws that our intellectual functions follow in their operations and, consequently, a precise knowledge of the general rules that are suitable for our guidance in the investigation of truth.[43]

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[41]Auguste Comte, A General View of Positivism (New York: Robert Speller and Sons, 1957), p. 117.

[42]Ibid., pp. 101-112.

[43]Ferré (trans.), Introduction to Positive Philosophy, by Comte, op. cit., p. 24.

The second benefit to be derived from the positivistic stage of development was ". . . the general recasting of our educational system."[44] The recasting was to be a replacing of the traditional European education which was essentially theological, metaphysical, and literary by a positive (scientific) education.[45]

The positivistic education not only was to include the addition of courses in the sciences, but was to concentrate upon teaching the methodology of scientific thought. Comte envisioned a general education for the mass of the people based on positivistic studies arranged so that each science was ". . . a different branch of a single trunk [and] should first be reduced to what constituted their essence--that is, to their principal methods and most important results."[46] Science then would become ". . . the basis of a new general and really rational education for [the] people."[47]

To Comte, the positive educational curriculum ensured that the positive philosophy, and therefore continued progress, would "constitute the mental framework of our descendents."[48]

The third great benefit to be derived from the positive philosophy was ". . . the social reorganization that must terminate the crisis in which the most civilized nations have found themselves for so long."[49] According to Comte:

> . . . the world is governed and overturned by ideas, or in other words that the whole social mechanism rests finally on opinions. [People] know, above all, that the great political

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[44]Ibid. [45]Ibid. [46]Ibid., p. 25.

[47]Ibid. [48]Ibid.

[49]Ferré (trans.), Introduction to Positive Philosophy, by Comte, p. 28.

> and moral crisis of existing societies is due at bottom to intellectual anarchy. Our gravest evil consists, indeed, in this profound divergence that now exists among all minds, with regard to all the fundamental maxims whose fixity is the first condition of a true social order. As long as individual minds are not unanimously agreed upon a certain number of general ideas capable of forming a common social doctrine, we cannot disguise the fact that the nations will necessarily remain in an essentially revolutionary state, in spite of all the political palliatives that may be adopted. Such a condition of things really admits only of provisional institutions. It is equally certain that, if this general agreement upon first principles can once be obtained, the appropriate institutions will necessarily follow, without giving rise to any grave shock; for the greater part of the disorder will have been already dissipated by the mere fact of the agreement. All those therefore, who feel the importance of a truly normal state of things should direct their attention mainly to this point.[50]

Comte saw the confusion and intellectual anarchy, ". . . at bottom due to the simultaneous employment of three radically incompatible philosophies--the theological, the metaphysical, and the positive."[51] To Comte it was, ". . . the existence of these three opposite philosophies that absolutely prevented all agreement on any essential point."[52]

The answer to the confusion was to accept one of these philosophical positions and upon its adoption, ". . . a fixed social order would result . . ."[53] The answer, as to which philosophical position to accept, was plain to Comte:

> . . . all that is necessary is to know which of the three philosophies can and must prevail by the nature of things; every sensible man should next endeavor to work for the triumph of that philosophy, whatever his particular opinions may have been before the question was analyzed. The question being once reduced to these simple terms, the issue cannot long remain doubtful, because it is evident for all kinds of reasons, . . ., that the positive philosophy is alone destined to prevail in the ordinary course of things. It alone has been

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[50]Ibid., pp. 28-29.

[51]Ibid., p. 29.

[52]Ibid.

[53]Ibid.

> making constant progress for many centuries, while its antagonists have been constantly in a state of decay.[54]

According to Comte the positivistic philosophy would bring order to the social system because the system would be based upon scientific laws, and thus order would assure progress. The social system that Comte saw evolving from the institution of the positivistic philosophy was one in which, ". . . [the] sympathetic instincts preponderate as far as possible over the selfish instincts; social feelings over personal feelings."[55]

He envisioned a society of individuals where everyone worked for the benefit of everyone else. A cooperative system rather than a competitive one was the dominant polity.[56]

The institution that Comte envisioned would bring about the cooperative system was the positivistic system of education. Comte thought that by isolating laws of social relationships that led to progress, and demonstrating the facility of these laws through education people would come to accept this way of life as the right and progressive way.[57]

As Comte said:

> The most willing assent is yielded every day to the rules which mathematicians, astronomers, physicists, chemists, or biologists, have laid down in their respective arts, even in cases where the greatest interests are at stake. And similar assent will certainly be accorded to moral rules when they, like the rest, shall be acknowledged to be susceptible of scientific proof.[58]

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[54]Ibid.

[55]Comte, A General View of Positivism, op. cit., p. 101.

[56]Ibid.

[57]Ibid., pp. 101-109.

[58]Ibid., p. 110.

The methodology employed in the educational system was to be the direct study of moral questions on an intellectual level, but more importantly the cooperative morality was to be imparted by direct exercise by the participants in the educational system.[59]

The Comtian system of positivism incorporated the concepts of historism, development, and the malleability of human nature all integrated with the idea of Progress and education. Comte was convinced that the system of positivism was an extension of the ideas, ". . . commenced by Bacon, Descartes, and Galileo . . ."[60]

In the Comtian system man was responsible for his own destiny, man must make his own society and man must consciously and responsibly make himself.[61]

## EVOLUTION AND THE IDEA OF PROGRESS

The impact of Charles Darwin's Origin of Species, upon nineteenth century thought was immense. Its relationship to the concept of historism and the idea of Progress was primarily associated with attempts to apply analogous concepts of development to human traits and social forms.[62]

Up to the time of the publication of Darwin's work the idea of Progress was confined to philosophic speculation and historical

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[59]Ibid., p. 111.

[60]Ferré (trans.), Introduction to Positive Philosophy, by Comte, op. cit., p. 30.

[61]Ronald Fletcher, The Making of Sociology (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1971), p. 166.

[62]Mandelbaum, op. cit., p. 77.

interpretation, but now the weight of science was added to these other fields and the synthesis gave great currency to the idea of Progress as the essence of reality.[63]

There were two main concepts in Darwin's work that influenced the idea of Progress: (1) the notion that evolutionary development was progressive, and (2) that the laws of nature and progress could be isolated and understood by man.[64]

Evolution as Progressive and Lawful

Althouth Darwin did not explicitly espouse a law of progress, his doctrine of natural selection tended to sponsor a belief that the laws of nature inevitably led to progress. This implication of progress, in Darwin's work, was readily apparent from such statements as the following:

> All that we can do, is to keep steadily in mind that each organic being is striving to increase in a geometrical ratio; that each at some period of its life, during some season of the year, during each generation or at intervals has to struggle for life and to suffer great destruction. When we reflect on this struggle, we may console ourselves with the full belief, that the war of nature is not incessant, that no fear is felt, that death is generally prompt, and that the vigorous, the healthy, and the happy survive and multiply.[65]

The idea of the progressiveness of evolution that was implied in Darwin's work was best seen in those passages in which he was speaking of the general history of life upon the earth and not in those in which he was offering a theoretical account of how new species developed.[66] The final sentences of the Origin of Species showed

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[63]Ibid., pp. 77-78.

[64]Ibid., p. 78.

[65]Charles Darwin, The Origin of Species, Great Books of the Western World, Vol. XXXXIX (Chacago; Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1952), p. 39.

[66]Mandelbaum, op. cit., p. 81.

Darwin's reliance on the relationship between evolution and progress in his general view of the history of life:

> Thus, from the war of nature, from famine and death, the most exalted object which we are capable of conceiving, namely, the production of the higher animals, directly follows. There is grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers, having been originally breathed by the Creator into a few forms or into one; and that whilst this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been, and are being evolved.[67]

It was, however, Darwin's apparent confirmation of the idea of the Great Chain of Being, that was present in ideas concerning evolution and historism prior to his work, that gave the greatest support to the idea of Progress being a necessary law of nature and of all of becoming tending toward perfection. The apparent confirmation of this idea was seen in Darwin's concluding chapter of the Origin of Species:

> As all the living forms of life are the lineal descendants of those which lived long before the Cambrian epoch, we may feel certain that the ordinary succession by generation has never once been broken, and that no cataclysm has desolated the whole world. Hence we may look with some confidence to a secure future of great length. And as natural selection works solely by and for the good of each being, all corporeal and mental endowments will tend to progress toward perfection.[68]

One tendency, in thought, during the latter part of the nineteenth century was to interpret Darwin's Origin of Species as a theory of progressive development.[69] A second tendency was to associate the Darwinian method, or the scientific method of induction and deduction, as the procedure to find and discover order among the phenomena of nature. Further, this knowledge was to be used for the improvement of life.[70]

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[67]Darwin, op. cit., p. 243.

[68]Ibid.

[69]Mandelbaum, op. cit., p. 83.

[70]Ibid., p. 87.

The first of these interpretations was carried into the thought of idealism, while the second line of interpretation blended with Comtian thought to provide the basis to future lines of positivism.[71]

## IDEALISM AFTER DARWIN

The idealistic line of metaphysics after the impact of Darwin, included the idea of biological evolution as well as the concepts of historism, the malleability of human nature, and the overall idea of Progress.[72]

The most influential personality of that line of thought was the French philosopher-scientist Henri Bergson. Bergson's thought was related to his idealistic predecessor Friedrich Hegel,[73] but because of the Darwinian influence biology was the background of Bergson's philosophy.[74] "To answer a question philosophically meant in Bergson's mind, to answer it in terms of biological evolution."[75]

Although Bergson accepted and built his philosophy around the concept of biological evolution, he rejected the mechanistic implications of Darwinism and proposed to build a system of true evolution.[76]

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[71]Ibid., pp. 83-87.

[72]Ibid., p. 83.

[73]Friedrich, op. cit., p. xvi.

[74]Will Durant, The Story of Philosophy (New York: Time Inc., Book Division, 1962), p. 320.

[75]Idella J. Gallagher, Morality in Evolution: The Moral Philosophy of Henri Bergson (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1970), p. 39.

[76]Ibid.

Henri Bergson [1859-1941]

The Bergsonian system of metaphysics was made up of a theory of knowledge and a theory of life both of which were based on the concepts of time and duration.[77] To Bergson the only way to understand the concepts of time and duration was to turn within and to view one's own consciousness, because that was the existence:

> . . . of which we are most assured and which we know best . . . , for of every other object we have notions which may be considered external and superficial, whereas, of ourselves, our perception is internal and profound.[78]

Upon turning within, according to Bergson:

> I find, first of all, that I pass from state to state. I am warm or cold, I am merry or sad, I work or I do nothing, I look at what is around me or I think of something else. Sensations, feelings, volitions, ideas--such are the changes into which my existence is divided and which color it in turns. I change, then, without ceasing.[79]

The inclination of one during that process was to think of the different states as many independent entities. But such a way of thinking resulted in a false picture for the various states were not at all distinct elements, they not only succeeded each other but they penetrated each other in a single endless flow.[80]

As Bergson said:

> Let us take the most stable of internal states, the visual perception of a motionless external object. The object may remain the same, I may look at it from the same side, at the same angle, in the same light; nevertheless the vision I now have of it differs from that which I have just had, even if only because the one is an instant older than the other. My memory is there, which conveys something of the past into the present. My mental

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[77]Ibid.

[78]Henri Bergson, Creative Evolution (New York: Random House, 1944), p. 3.

[79]Ibid.

[80]Ibid., pp. 3-4.

> state, as it advances on the road of time, is continually swelling with the duration which it accumulates: it goes on increasing--rolling upon itself, as a snowball on the snow.[81]

Duration and time then were the continuous progress of the past that gnawed into the future and that swelled as it advanced. And as the past grew without ceasing, so also there was no limit to its preservation.[82]

The essence of reality in Bergsonian thought was duration which was all of one piece, an unbroken progress in which the whole of the past was accumulated and preserved and borne along with the present moment.[83]

Bergson's concept of duration had all of the elements of historism within it for it was based on the idea that the present contains within it all of the elements of the past, and that true reality was an unfolding of characteristics the elements of which were present in preceding events. The concepts of duration and flowing time led Bergson to conclude that character was the condensation of the history people had lived since birth, that their present moment was something new and unforeseen added to the accumulation of past events. All of the past survived in the present and was preserved in memory.[84]

As Bergson said:

> From this survival of the past it follows that consciousness cannot go through the same state twice. The circumstances may still be the same, but they will act no longer on the same person, since they find him at a new moment in history. Our personality which is being built up each instant with its accumulated experience, changes without ceasing. By changing, it prevents any state, . . . from ever repeating it in its very depth. That is

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[81]Ibid., p. 4.

[82]Ibid., p. 7.

[83]Gallagher, op. cit., p. 19.

[84]Ibid., p. 20.

> why our duration is irreversible. . . . Thus our personality shoots, grows and ripens without ceasing. Each of its moments is something new added to what was before. We may go further: it is not only something new, but something unforeseeable.[85]

Bergson applied the same mode of reasoning to the process of biological evolution. The line of thought Bergson used in relation to biological evolution was related to the line of thought that saw Darwin's work as having established a law of progressive development. In relation to this Bergson said:

> The history of the evolution of life, . . . reveals to us how the intellect has been formed, by an uninterrupted progress, along a line which ascends through the vertebrate series up to man. It shows us in the faculty of understanding an appendage of the faculty of acting, a more and more precise, . . . complex and supple adaptation of the consciousness of living beings to the conditions of existence that are made for them. Hence should result this consequence that our intellect . . . is intended to secure the perfect fitting of our body to its environment, . . .[86]

Life, like consciousness, was a duration, it was a stream flowing through time. Carrying forward into the present what had been before, and the flow had led to ever higher levels of life thus it was progressive and creative. Bergson defined life as a stream of consciousness struggling to free itself from matter. In its struggle to overcome matter, the fact of life led to ever higher levels of conscious life.[87]

In Bergson's view of evolution man was at the apex of the evolutionary process because, in all lower forms of life, consciousness came to a halt. In man alone, consciousness kept on its way. According to this view progress in the world could only take place through the

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[85]Bergson, op. cit., p. 8.

[86]Ibid., p. xix.

[87]Ibid., p. 294.

mind of man because mind represented the highest depository of life defined as consciousness.[88]

To Bergson, however, the same struggle of life, or consciousness, to overcome matter that had taken place in the natural world continued in the world of man's mind.[89] The struggle, toward higher levels of consciousness, continued because man had two aspects to his process of thought. The first aspect was the intellect, that thought on and was rooted in matter, the second was the process of intuition that sought to transcend matter, to break free, and was therefore progressive.[90]

The first of these types of thought Bergson likened to scientific thought, the second to philosophic thought. And to Bergson, "A complete and perfect humanity would be that in which these two forms of conscious activity should attain their full development."[91]

To Bergson progress was related to the interrelationship between these two types of thought, intellect carried the past into the present, but it was intuition that restructured the past, added the present and emerged the new. Social progress, however, would be slow because the process of intuitive thought, that stream of vital consciousness was deposited in only a few superior individuals who were capable of creating a fresh emotion and arousing others to follow them.[92] The philosophical position of Bergson was based on the idea of Progress woven into his concepts of consciousness, knowledge, and

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[88]Ibid., p. 290.

[89]Ibid., p. 291.

[90]Ibid.

[91]Ibid.

[92]Gallagher, op. cit., p. 73.

evolution. It was these four ideas that provided the philosophical foundation for the Essentialist position on education and curriculum.[93]

## POSITIVISM AFTER DARWIN

### Lester F. Ward [1841-1913]

The Comtian positivistic philosophy was carried over into American thought by Lester F. Ward. Ward was influenced by Comte's stages of mental development. Of his relationship to Comte, Ward said:

> This view, which Comte entertained from the first, which constitutes the foundation of his Politique Positive, is the same that I have always defended, and is neither more nor less than the theory of social forces underlying my entire philosophy.[94]

Ward, like Comte was opposed to the continuance of theological and philosophical speculation, and strongly upheld science alone as being productive of knowledge. To Ward only the adherence to the scientific method could bring about continued progress; all other methods were productive of error and could never lead to progress.[95]

> What is needed as a guide to action and a condition to progress as well as to happiness is complete possession of truth, absolute faith in the laws of nature. The admission of the possibility of an exception is fatal to all the calculations that can be made looking to improvement. If an engineer were to suppose that the laws of stress and strain were arbitrary and might change at any moment, he would never dare to build a bridge or a tower. But he has absolute faith in those laws, and be builds with confidence. So it must ultimately be with every act of life. The laws of nature and of life must first be learned as are those of stress and strain, and then each step in conformity with those laws is certain.[96]

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[93]Michael Demiashkevich, An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education (New York: American Book Company, 1935), p. 154.

[94]Lester F. Ward, Applied Sociology (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1906), pp. 42-43.

[95]Fletcher, op. cit., p. 460. [96]Ward, op. cit., pp. 86-87.

In the Wardian construct the most important concept for people to understand, in order that progress might continue, was that of cause and effect. This, he maintained, was a central condition of mind before man could truly understand nature and society.[97] To Ward, the only orientation toward nature that could yield reliable knowledge was that of disciplined science, and this orientation had two aspects. Man had to approach nature first as a student and then as a master.[98]

The central concept of Ward's theory of man as a student was related to the Darwinian concepts of evolution and natural law. Ward accepted Darwin's concept of evolution, that man was produced by the natural processes of evolution, competition, and natural selection.[99] He emphasized the development of the human brain as that characteristic peculiar to the species that provided man with a biologic advantage over other animals, Ward said:

> Brain does not differ in respect from horns or teeth or claws. In the great struggle which the human animal went through to gain his supremacy, it was brain that finally enabled him to succeed, and under the biologic law of selection where superior sagacity meant fitness to survive, the human brain was gradually built up . . .[100]

To Ward this type of development was genetic development, and it applied to humans when they were a part of nature, prior to the establishment of society. Genetic development was based on competition, it was extremely wasteful and progressed to higher levels of biologic organization only at slow rates.[101]

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[97]Ibid., pp. 89-90.

[98]Fletcher, op. cit., p. 461.

[99]Lester F. Ward, The Psychic Factors of Civilization (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1892), pp. 262-263.

[100]Ibid., p. 261.

[101]Ibid., p. 260.

When the human mind emerged, man no longer had to depend upon genetic development as the sole mechanism of progress. Humans could rise above genetic evolution. With their telic minds men could begin to direct their own social evolution.[102]

> The brain of man was thus itself originally an engine of competition. Intellect was a mere servant of the will. It was only by virtue of its peculiar character through which it was capable of perceiving that the direct animal method was not the most successful one, even in the bare struggle for existence, that it so early began, in the interest of pure egoism, to antagonize that method and to adopt the opposite and direct method of design, calculation, and cooperation.[103]

With the Wardian theory, man, if he were a student of nature, and studied the natural laws of nature, would perceive that the law of nature was competition, and although this law was productive of progress, the progress attained was slow and wasteful. But if man studied the laws of society, through history, he would perceive that society had progressed rapidly when humanity had been rational and cooperative. The law of progress, then, according to Ward, was cooperation, and this law should be used by man for ". . . securing the common interest of the social organism."[104]

The central theme of Ward's social theory was that humanity should study society and isolate those laws of social development that led to institutions that facilitated social cooperation. By this method progress would be manifest because as these institutions developed, social progress would accelerate. This condition of progress, according to Ward, could only be achieved when man turned away from theology and philosophy and depended upon science as the method of finding truth.

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[102]Ibid., p. 261.

[103]Ibid., p. 263.

[104]Ibid., p. 276.

When man finally employed this method, Comte's positivistic stage of mental development would have been reached, man would be master over nature, and social progress was guaranteed.[105]

Of the relationship between science and social progress, Ward said:

> These problems have nothing to do with ethics. They are not moral questions, although upon their solution more than upon anything else depends the moral progress of the world. They are purely social problems and can only be properly considered in the dry light of science. The proper name for this science is meliorism, the science of the improvement or amelioration of the human or social state.[106]

The idea of Progress was central to Ward's social theory. He saw progress in nature as based on the condition of competition, and viewed natural progress as slow and unsuitable for the future of human society. With the emergence of mind, however, progress if it were based on the methods of science and the law of social cooperation, could be directed by man for the benefit of all men and progress would then be ensured and rapid. To Ward the best way to bring about the positivistic state of mind, and thereby ensure human progress, was through the institution of education.[107]

## Ward and Education

Ward's ideas on education were directly related to his concept of the science of meliorism and therefore were of a practical, scientific and industrial nature. Defining his position on the definition of knowledge, Ward said:

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[105]Ibid., passim.

[106]Ibid., p. 290.

[107]Ward, The Psychic Factors of Civilization, passim.

> It sometimes seems to me that in refining upon the blessings of education we forget altogether what knowledge is for. So far as the improvement of man's estate is concerned we know only in order to do. Knowledge unapplied is sterile. It is only fruitful when it makes two blades of grass grow where only one grew before, when it converts "raw material" into useful objects, or when it directs into some useful channel the forces of nature which were previously running to waste or doing injury to man. Except as a matter of pure culture, the mere satisfaction of an intellectual craving or of aesthetic taste, knowledge is literally useless unless thus vitalized by action.[108]

Working from the above definition of knowledge, Ward believed that the most important knowledge that could be transmitted in school was scientific knowledge. But even here he refined his position so that it was not the knowledge of pure science that was taught but the knowledge of applied science.[109] It was knowledge that was the ensurer and sustainer of social progress, for according to Ward, ". . . civilization is not the product of what has been thought, but of what has been first thought and then done."[110]

The school curriculum was to be built around the industrial arts because these arts personified the concept of applied science. If, according to Ward, educators would reorganize the school curriculum around the industrial arts, society would gain certain definite advantages such as (1) a harmony of thought and action necessary to the peace and prosperity of the state, (2) a popular appreciation of the character and value of mechanical appliances, industrial achievements and art endowments, (3) a substitution of skill and exactness for bungling and guesswork in all practical pursuits of life, and (4) increase the adaptability of the individual to a changing industrial society.[111]

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[108]Lester F. Ward, Glimpses of the Cosmos, IV (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1915), p. 99.

[109]Ibid. [110]Ibid. [111]Ibid., pp. 97-98.

Not only was the curriculum to be reorganized but the entire methodology of instruction was to be revamped as well. Students were not to sit passively and receive knowledge, but were to be involved in the process of discovery and more importantly in problem solving and invention.[112]

Relating methodology of instruction to the idea of Progress, Ward said:

> Invention implies, first, an acquaintance with the natural phenomena and laws in question; secondly, the perception of the modifications of the attendant conditions necessary to produce the required beneficial effects; and thirdly, the successful performance of the mechanical operations involved in these modifications. None of these steps can be omitted. Invention is, therefore, a very complicated form of intellectual and physical action. But taken in its broadest sense, as here defined, it so transcends all other forms of activity in its importance to mankind as to justify the strongest efforts to cultivate and perfect it as a faculty. By virtue of it alone man is a progressive being, and without it he would have remained a savage, if, indeed, he could have reached even the state of a savage.[113]

Ward was convinced that the revamping of the educational system around the industrial arts, and the cultivation of the faculty of invention were key steps that man had to take in order to ensure social progress. Once these steps were taken the positivistic stage of mental development was instituted, and progress based on science and cooperation was ensured.[114]

## POSITIVISM AND UTOPIANISM

### Edward Bellamy [1850-1898]

The positivistic philosophy, with its central points of reliance on science and a cooperative social structure were incorporated

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[112]Ibid., p. 99. [113]Ibid. [114]Ibid., pp. 97-99.

into fictional literature by Edward Bellamy. Bellamy's utopian novel, Looking Backward, was about life in the future, when the positivistic philosophy had been fully incorporated into the mental framework of man, and it embodied many of the same ideas that were put forth by Comte and Ward.[115]

Bellamy and Ward had a brief correspondence, and exchange of ideas, about progress and social aims. Ward sent Bellamy, who was the editor of the journal The New Nation, at least two manuscripts (1) False Notions of Government, and (2) The Psychologic Basis of Social Economics.[116]

Bellamy accepted the second of these manuscripts for publication. In a letter to Ward he wrote:

> The 'New Nation' 13 Winter St.
> Boston
> Jan. 25, 1893
>
> Mr. Lester F. Ward:
>
> I have just read your altogether admirable address (kindly sent me by yourself) upon 'The Psychologic Basis of Social Economics,' and cannot refrain from congratulating you upon so masterly a statement. It would be extremely beneficial to the cause of social reform if some way could be devised to give it general circulation.
>
> Sincerely yours
>
> EDWARD BELLAMY[117]

The article was eventually used by Ward to begin part 3 of The Psychic Factors of Civilization, and thereby found the general circulation that Bellamy had looked for.[118]

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[115]Edward Bellamy, Looking Backward (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1887), passim.

[116]Ward, Glimpses of the Cosmos, p. 346. [117]Ibid. [118]Ibid.

Ward was familiar with Bellamy's novel and gave his full accord to the work when he referred to it as ". . . a classic . . . A lasting work of Art. . . ."[119]

The central theme of Bellamy's novel was that the nature of man was malleable, and that education could provide the basis upon which social progress could be attained.[120] Bellamy, like Ward, saw that nineteenth century society was based on competition and that this competitive environment had led to a social system that forced people to brutalize one another for the goods that meant survival.[121]

In characterizing the nineteenth century social system one of Bellamy's fictional characters said:

> It is not hard to understand the desperation with which men and women, who under other conditions would have been full of gentleness and truth, fought and tore each other in the scramble for gold, when we realize what it meant to miss it, what poverty was in that day. For the body it was hunger and thirst, torment by heat and frost, in sickness neglect, in health unremitting toil; for the moral nature it meant oppression, contempt, and the patient endurance of indignity, brutish associations from infancy, the loss of all the innocence of childhood, the grace of womanhood, the dignity of manhood; for the mind it meant the death of ignorance, the torpor of all those faculties which distinguish us from brutes, the reduction of life to a round of bodily functions.[122]

As Bellamy unfolded his story he showed how education had brought people to realize that the social arrangement of competition was contrary to progress, and that a system of cooperation based on scientific knowledge was the type of a system that would lead to progress and meliorization.[123]

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[119]Lester F. Ward, Pure Sociology (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1903), p. 84.

[120]Bellamy, op. cit., p. 281.

[121]Ibid., p. 278.

[122]Ibid., pp. 278-279.

[123]Ibid., p. 285.

Ballamy, like Ward and Comte, was convinced that man could be the molder of his own future, and that education, science, and a cooperative social arrangement were the keys by which a better society was possible.[124]

It was the philosophy of positivism, based as it was on the idea of Progress, that provided the foundation on which was constructed the educational philosophies and curriculum theories of Experimentalism and later Reconstructionism.[125]

## SUMMARY

During the nineteenth century the idea of Progress was refined, and the concepts of historism and the malleability of human nature were blended with it to provide the foundation upon which metaphysical idealism and positivism developed.

The philosophy of metaphysical idealism was first represented by the ideas of Hegel. Hegel developed the concept of the "world spirit" which sought perfection through history and the mind of man by progressive perfection of rational thought. Hegel saw education as the key institution for the facilitation of progress. His educational system was based on the idea that students should learn the best of the past, know the present, and blend the two to produce a new and progressive stage of human thought.

The philosophy of positivism was first systematically expressed by Auguste Comte. Comte gave no currency to theological or metaphysical

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[124]Ibid.

[125]John Dewey, Reconstruction in Philosophy (Boston: The Beacon Press, 1920), pp. 48-49.

thought and looked to scientific thought as the only method that would facilitate progress. He envisioned a society based on science, made up of cooperating individuals who sought to bring about the overall good of society. Comte, like Hegel, saw education as the key to progressive development. But unlike Hegel, Comte saw science as the central subject and thought of education.

Darwin's Origin of Species was interpreted as having confirmed progressive development by natural law and was incorporated into the thought of both idealism and positivism.

Henri Bergson followed Hegel's train of thought, but incorporated biology into his philosophy and pictured this development as a progressive movement toward higher levels of consciousness. The core idea in Bergson's thought was similar to Hegel's concept of the past being carried into the present and restructured so that the new would emerge at a progressively higher level.

It was the ideas of idealism blended with progress, as they were, that provided the foundation upon which the educational philosophy and curriculum theory of Essentialism developed.

Lester F. Ward followed the lead of Comte and further developed the positivistic philosophy. Ward portrayed man as the determiner of his own future, and developed the thesis that if man instituted a cooperative scientific society social progress would be inevitable. Ward looked to establish the science of meliorism, which was the science of bettering the human condition by isolating and applying the laws of social development. Education played a major role in Ward's social thinking. He looked to education as helping to develop the positivistic stage of mental development and saw the curriculum based on applied science and industrial arts.

Edward Bellamy translated the positivist philosophy into utopian fiction and pictured future society as based on scientific principles and cooperative human associations.

The ideas formulated by these positivist thinkers provided the foundation upon which the educational philosophies and curriculum theories of Experimentalism and Reconstructionism were built.

The two dominant schools of thought during the nineteenth century, metaphysical idealism and positivism, although they projected different ways of thought for man, and developed somewhat different precepts for understanding reality, were both deeply influenced by the idea of Progress (see Figure 2).

It was because of this common influence that the variously associated philosophers all saw a brighter future ahead for society, and saw the process of education as playing a central role in bringing about this better world.

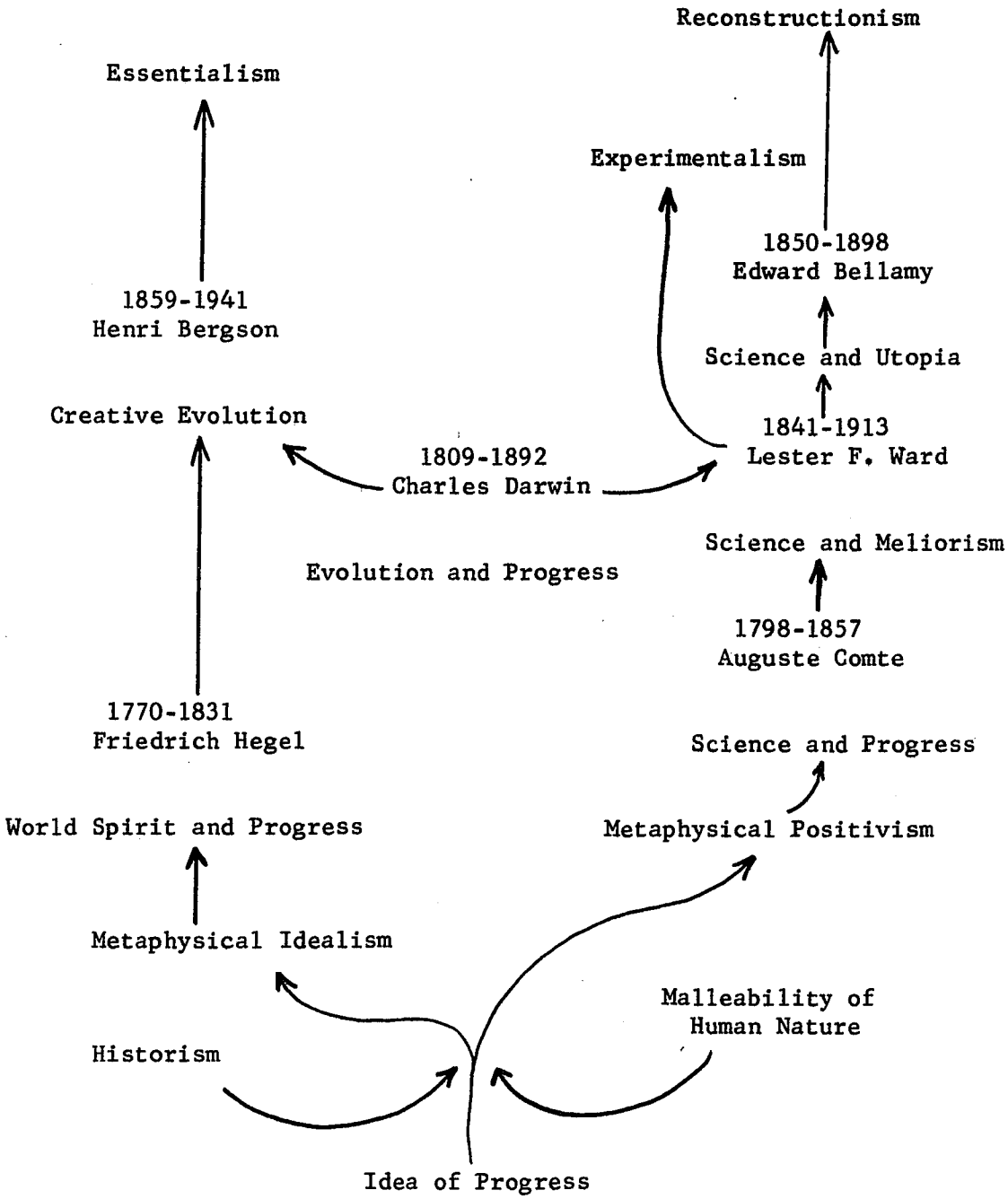


Figure 2

The Idea of Progress During the Nineteenth Century

## Chapter 4

## EXPERIMENTALISM

### INTRODUCTION

Few Americans, in the twentieth century, had as much influence on intellectual development as John Dewey, the founder of the philosophic school of Experimentalism. A teacher and writer for over half a century, he helped to reshape contemporary thought in the fields of philosophy and education.[1]

Born in Burlington, Vermont, in 1859, he was reared and educated in a rural atmosphere, where he was close to nature as well as to agricultural and simple industrial activities.[2] Following his graduation from high school, he continued his education in Burlington, attending the University of Vermont, from which he received his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1879.[3] It was during his senior year at the University of Vermont that Dewey was introduced to the study of philosophy. Reading under James March and H. A. P. Torrey, Dewey studied the works of the German philosophers Kant, Schelling, and Hegel.[4]

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[1]Stanley N. Worton, The Writings of John Dewey (New York: Simon and Schuster, Inc., 1964), p. 5.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Ibid.

[4]John Dewey, "From Absolutism to Experimentalism," The American Hegelians, ed. William H. Goetzmann (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1973), p. 381.

That educational experience and his association with Torrey, had a deep effect upon Dewey and the direction that he pursued for the rest of his life. In relation to this effect Dewey said:

> His [Torrey's] interest in philosophy . . . was genuine not perfunctory; he was an excellent teacher, and I owe to him a double debt, that of turning my thoughts definitely to the study of philosophy as a life-pursuit, and of a generous gift of time to me during a year devoted privately under his direction to a reading of classics in the history of philosophy and learning to read philosophic German.[5]

After graduation Dewey taught secondary school for two years in Oil City, Pennsylvania. He then entered graduate school at Johns Hopkins University where he majored in philosophy and minored in history and political science. He received his Doctor of Philosophy degree in 1884, and was offered a teaching appointment in philosophy at the University of Michigan. During his ten years at Michigan, Dewey taught philosophy and spent his research time in the critical re-evaluation of German philosophy.[6]

In 1894, Dewey was invited to the University of Chicago to head its Department of Philosophy, Psychology, and Pedagogy. Through his teaching and writings he was responsible for developing among some of his students and colleagues what became known as the "Chicago school" of pragmatism.[7] Dewey, however, preferred the name "Experimentalism" above any other to describe his philosophic position or school of thought.[8]

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[5]Ibid., p. 382.

[6]Worton, op. cit., p. 5.

[7]Ibid., pp. 5-6.

[8]George F. Kneller (ed.), Foundations of Education (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1971), p. 209.

From Chicago, where he had been for ten years, he went to Columbia University and was a member of the Department of Philosophy and Psychology. While at Columbia, he entered the most productive phase of his career and published several books which were direct outgrowths of his thinking and experimentation at the Laboratory School that he had founded at the University of Chicago. This Laboratory School, which was known popularly as the "Dewey School," was an experimental elementary school that Dewey utilized to test his educational philosophy and curriculum theory.[9]

Dewey remained at his Columbia teaching post until 1930, when he retired from active teaching. His retirement, however, did not put an end to his philosophic career and Dewey continued to be active in writing and traveling until he died in 1952, at the age of ninety-two.[10]

## INTELLECTUAL ANTECEDENTS

Dewey's earliest philosophic allegiance was to the Hegelian system of philosophy. While he was a student at Johns Hopkins University the idealism of Hegel was the dominant systematic philosophy taught by his major professor, Mr. Morris.[11]

According to Dewey there were two reasons for his original reliance upon the philosophy of Hegel, (1) as a young and impressionable student unacquainted with any system of thought he was deeply affected by the enthusiastic and scholarly devotion of his teacher, and (2) he had an intense and emotional craving for intellectual unification

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[9]Worton, op. cit., p. 6.

[10]Ibid.

[11]Dewey, "From Absolutism to Experimentalism," op. cit., p. 385.

which the Hegelian philosophy helped to temporarily satisfy.[12]

The second of these two reasons was for Dewey the more important because it gave him release from an emotional hunger caused by his early New England upbringing. In relation to this, Dewey said:

> . . . the sense of divisions and separations that were, I suppose, borne in upon me as a consequence of a heritage of New England culture, divisions by way of isolation of self from the world, of soul from body, of nature from God, brought a painful oppression--or, rather, they were an inward laceration. My earlier philosophic study had been an intellectual gymnastic. Hegel's synthesis of subject and object, matter and spirit, the divine and the human, was, however, no mere intellectual formula; it operated as an immense release, a liberation. Hegel's treatment of human culture, of institutions and the arts, involved the same dissolution of hard-and-fast dividing walls, and had a special attraction for me.[13]

Dewey, however, was not only interested in philosophy or metaphysics because of the personal satisfaction that he derived from its study, but also because of a deep interest in the application of philosophy to social problems. As he said: "Social interests and problems from an early period had to me the intellectual appeal and provided the intellectual sustenance that many seem to have found primarily in religious questions."[14]

These two driving forces, a quest for personal intellectual satisfaction, and the quest for the answer to present social problems, led him to read widely. During his reading he came upon the works of Auguste Comte which had a deep effect upon him.[15]

Dewey was particularly impressed by Comte's ". . . idea of the disorganized character of modern Western culture, due to a disintegrative individualism, and his idea of a synthesis of science that should

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[12]Ibid.

[13]Ibid., p. 386.

[14]Ibid.

[14]Ibid., p. 387.

be a regulative method of an organized social life. . . ."[16] Later in his studies Dewey was able to synthesize the works of Comte and Francis Bacon, the two great positivist prophets of the idea of Progress.[17] This synthesis caused Dewey to slowly move away from his original allegiance to the Hegelian system of philosophy, but he did not move far enough away from Hegel's idealism to completely repudiate its effect upon him.[18]

As Dewey said:

> I drifted away from Hegelianism in the next fifteen years; the word "drifting" expresses the slow and, for a long time, imperceptible character of the movement. . . . Nevertheless I should never think of ignoring, much less denying, what an astute critic occasionally refers to as a novel discovery--that acquaintance with Hegel has left a permanent deposit in my thinking. The form, the schematism, of his system now seems to me artificial to the last degree. But in the content of his ideas there is often an extraordinary depth; in many of his analyses, taken out of their mechanical dialectical setting, an extraordinary acuteness. Were it possible for me to be a devotee of any system, I still should believe that there is greater richness and greater variety of insight in Hegel than in any other single systematic philosopher. . . .[19]

Dewey's broad philosophic foundations were rooted in a blend of metaphysical positivism, as expressed by Francis Bacon and Auguste Comte, and metaphysical idealism as it was expressed by Friedrich Hegel.[20]

## The Comtian-Hegelian Synthesis

Dewey traced the history of the development of philosophy in Reconstruction in Philosophy and essentially blended Comte's idea of the movement of thought toward positivism, and Hegel's conception of the continued progressive movement of history to higher stages.

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[16]Ibid. [17]Ibid. [18]Ibid.

[19]Ibid. [20]Ibid., pp. 386-387.

Dewey's blend was based on the idea of historism. It involved the notion that change took place in a specific direction. Philosophy, he thought, moved toward positivism, and involved the view that what came later in a process was an unfolding of what was implicitly present in earlier stages. That was essentially an Hegelian concept.[21]

Dewey began his history of philosophy by concentrating upon early man before the establishment of an agricultural society. During this period, according to Dewey, man was primarily a hunting being and his life alternated between periods of high activity (the hunt) and long periods of inactivity (between hunts). In order to occupy his mind during these periods of inactivity man began to tell stories about the hunt. Inevitably early man dramatized these stories, embellished the actual events, gave the animals human personalities and in essence began the tradition of mythology.[22] These crude beginnings actually led to a stage in human thought where man's interpretation of reality was dominated by a primitive but eventually institutionalized theology.[23]

On the origin of the theological stage of human thought, Dewey said:

> Thus were produced not merely the multitude of tales and legends dwelling affectionately upon the activities and features of animals, but also those elaborate rites and cults which made animals ancestors, heroes, tribal figure-heads and divinities.[24]

As man progressed through history he eventually left the hunting life behind him, took up an agricultural existence and urban living flourished. Man in general did not change the essence of his thought

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[21]John Dewey, Reconstruction in Philosophy (Boston: The Beacon Press, 1920), passim.

[22]Ibid., p. 4. [23]Ibid., p. 5. [24]Ibid.

relating to his concepts of reality. He retained the early essence but evolved a new means of thinking, moving from mythology to rationality or what was called philosophy.[25]

Regarding this environmental change and the accompanying retention of old thought patterns Dewey said:

> It was not possible to conceive of the content of social institutions in any form radically different from that in which they existed in the past. It became the work of philosophy to justify on rational grounds the spirit, though not the form, of accepted beliefs and traditional customs.[26]

According to Dewey, there progressed along with the major thought patterns of man, a second type of thought directly related to his practical existence:

> The requirements of continued existence make indispensable some attention to the actual facts of the world. Although it is surprising how little check the environment actually puts upon the formation of ideas, since no notions are too absurd not to have been accepted by some people, yet the environment does enforce a certain minimum of correctness under penalty of extinction. That certain things are foods, that they are to be found in certain places, that water drowns, fire burns, that sharp points penetrate and cut, that heavy things fall unless supported, that there is a certain regularity in the changes of day and night and the alternation of hot and cold, wet and dry:--such prosaic facts force themselves upon even primitive attention.[27]

This type of practical thought grew as man progressed and its growth was accelerated by urban living as the arts and crafts developed. As man became more industrialized the essence of the practical continued to expand and to accumulate.[28]

To Dewey this practical thinking stood in juxtaposition to the mythological or philosophical ideas that continued to dominate the

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[25]Ibid., p. 18.

[26]Ibid.

[27]Ibid., p. 10.

[28]Ibid., pp. 10-11.

thought patterns of man. Man through history had been able to live with both types of thought so long as the juxtaposition of these ideas was not too radical.[29]

With time, however, and the continued accumulation of practical knowledge, the difference between the two types of thought became too radical, and a crisis in man's thinking was precipitated by the conflict between the two different patterns of perception.[30] As Dewey said: ". . . the time came when matter of fact knowledge increased to such bulk and scope that it came into conflict with not merely the detail but with the spirit and temper of traditional and imaginative beliefs."[31]

In summarizing the parameters of the conflict Dewey said:

> Over against absolute and noumenal reality which could be apprehended only by the systematic discipline of philosophy itself stood the ordinary empirical, relatively real, phenomenal world of everyday experience. It was with this world that the practical affairs and utilities of men were connected. It was to this imperfect and perishing world that matter of fact, positivistic science referred.[32]

To Dewey the answer to the conflict was the redefining of the purpose and intent of philosophy. No longer could philosophy deal with the quest for the ". . . Ultimate and Absolute Reality. . . ."[33] In the future philosophy was to be used to clarify men's ideas as to the social and moral strife of their own day. Its aim was to become, so far as was humanly possible, an organ for dealing with conflicts.[34]

The influence of the idea of Progress on Dewey's definition of future philosophy can be seen when Dewey defined philosophy as a method

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[29]Dewey, Reconstruction in Philosophy, p. 11.

[30]Ibid., p. 13. [31]Ibid. [32]Ibid.

[33]Ibid., p. 26. [34]Ibid.

to ". . . move mankind and . . . [to contribute] to the aspirations of men to attain a more ordered and intelligent happiness."[35] In his history of philosophy, Dewey blended Comtian and Hegelian concepts. His stages of thought were equivalent to Comte's history of the development of thought; from theology to metaphysics to positivism. Dewey's reliance on the juxtaposition of ideas and conflict, with the ever-accumulating presence of a minor idea as opposed to a major idea that eventually culminated in a synthesis and a higher or better state of thinking, was related to the historism of Hegel.[36] Dewey quoted Francis Bacon and indicated that he was the first philosopher to realize and to state the new way of thinking; which was based upon the synthesis of philosophy, science, and the idea of Progress.[37]

Francis Bacon

According to Dewey, Baconian thought ". . . put before our minds the larger features of a new spirit which was at work in causing intellectual reconstructionism."[38] Bacon's aphorism that "Knowledge is Power" was to Dewey the statement that ushered in a new age of thought in the history of man.[39]

Dewey was particularly impressed by Bacon's critique of learning during the Elizabethan age. He, according to Dewey, viewed this learning as false and pretentious knowledge for it did not give power.[40]

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[35]Ibid., p. 27.

[36]Ibid., passim.

[37]Ibid., p. 28.

[38]Ibid., p. 29.

[39]Ibid.

[40]Ibid.

As Dewey said:

> In his most extensive discussion he [Bacon] classified the learning of his day under three heads delicate, fantastic, and contentious. Under delicate learning, he included literary learning. . . . In substance he anticipated most of the attacks which educational reformers since his time have made upon one-sided literary culture. It contributed not to power but to ornament and decoration. . . . By fantastic learning he meant the quasi-magical science that was so rife all over Europe in the sixteenth century--wild developments of alchemy, astrology, etc. Upon this he poured his greatest vials of wrath because the corruption of the good is the worst of evils. . . . For our purposes, however, what he says about contentious learning is the most important. For by this, he means the traditional science which had come down . . . from antiquity through scholasticism. It is called contentious both because of the logical method used and the end to which it was put. In a certain sense it aimed at power, but power over other men . . . not power over natural forces in the common interest of all.[41]

Dewey saw the Baconian concept of knowledge and method as standing in opposition to the Aristotelian method which had been the dominant method of the past. The Aristotelian method assumed that someone was already in possession of truth and the aim of this method was the conquest of men's minds. The Baconian method, in contrast, had an exceedingly slight opinion of the amount of truth already existent, and a lively sense of the importance of truths still to be attained.[42]

Bacon's method meant growth of knowledge, change, and included within it the concept of becoming, whereas, the Aristotelian method was based on the possession of knowledge and aimed at only a syllogistic demonstration of possessed truth.[43] In essence, Bacon looked toward the future and to the continued progress of man. Aristotle sought only to prove the old; thus he played into the hands of inert conservatism.[44] The significance of the new logic announced by Bacon was that it ". . .

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[41]Dewey, Reconstruction in Philosophy, pp. 29-30.

[42]Ibid., p. 31. [43]Ibid. [44]Ibid., p. 33.

would protect the mind against itself: to teach it to undergo a patient and prolonged apprenticeship to fact in its infinite variety and particularly: to obey nature intellectually in order to command it practically."[45]

According to Dewey, because of the Baconian method:

> . . . great store is set upon the idea of progress. . . . The future rather than the past dominates the imagination. The Golden Age lies ahead of us not behind us. Everywhere new possibilities beckon and arouse courage and effort. . . . Man is capable, if he will but exercise the required courage, intelligence and effort, of shaping his own fate. Physical conditions offer no insurmountable barriers . . . the patient and experimental study of nature, bearing fruit in inventions which control nature and subdue her forces to social uses, is the method by which progress is made. Knowledge is power and knowledge is achieved by sending the mind to school to nature to learn her processes of change.[46]

To Dewey, Bacon's announcement of the new method of inductive reasoning and the application of philosophy to concrete rather than ultimate questions ushered in a new age for man. The new age was based on the idea of Progress.[47]

Charles Darwin

Dewey found in Charles Darwin's Origin of Species a confirmation of the Baconian idea that philosophy should deal with concrete problems rather than questions relating to ultimate essences.[48] According to Dewey, Darwin's work transformed man's familiar way of thinking about the existence of an absolute reality and purpose in being to a more relativistic view of reality and a universe of change and becoming.[49]

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[45]Ibid., p. 36. [46]Ibid., pp. 48-49. [47]Ibid.

[48]John Dewey, The Influence of Darwin on Philosophy (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1910), p. 15.

[49]Ibid., pp. 1-2.

Dewey believed that the true meaning of Darwin's work, as it related to the reconstruction of philosophy, was that:

> Interest shifts from the wholesale essence back of special changes to the question of how special changes serve and defeat concrete purposes; shifts from an intelligence that shaped things once for all to the particular intelligence which things are even now shaping; shifts from an ultimate goal of good to the direct increments of justice and happiness that intelligent administration of existent conditions may beget and that present carelessness or stupidity will destroy or forego.[50]

Darwin's work did away with the medieval concept of Providence and the Greek concept of Moira. He destroyed the concept of a designing force in nature and presented man with a universe the reality of which was built on change and chance. Man was now alone in the universe and his survival depended upon him, and him alone. Man's thinking; his philosophy, could no longer be directed at understanding a metaphysical absolute but had to be directed at concrete practical problems of survival.[51]

Because of Darwin's work Dewey believed that:

> . . . philosophy must in time become a method of locating and interpreting the more serious of the conflicts that occur in life, and a method of projecting ways for dealing with them: a method of moral and political diagnosis and prognosis.[52]

When philosophy becomes a method of dealing with the concrete, according to Dewey, it:

> . . . humbles its pretensions to the work of projecting hypotheses for the education and conduct of mind, individual and social, is thereby subjected to test by the way in which the ideas it propounds work out in practice. In having modesty forced upon it, philosophy also acquires responsibility.[53]

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[50]Ibid., p. 15.

[51]Ibid., pp. 1-2.

[52]Ibid., p. 17.

[53]Ibid., p. 18.

To Dewey, Darwin's work fortified the pronouncements of Bacon. Man could and must be the director of his own future; philosophy must concern itself with concrete problems, and the scientific method was the means by which man must attack and solve problems. Dewey's reliance upon Bacon and Darwin placed him in the positivistic school of thought and made the idea of Progress a central notion in his philosophy of Experimentalism.[54]

Lester F. Ward

In 1894, Dewey wrote a review of Ward's Psychic Factors of Civilization. This review was printed in the July issue of the Psychological Review, and was quite favorable to the social philosophy of Ward.[55]

In relation to Dewey's review Ward said:

> Undoubtedly the ablest review that appeared was that of Professor John Dewey. . . . I do not say this merely because it is so largely favorable. . . . I need only say that it is far more penetrating than any of the other reviews.[56]

Dewey agreed with Ward's interpretation of the origin of mind being essentially related to Darwin's concept of natural selection. Mind evolved naturally from the biologic world and was essentially the adaptation that gave man the advantage to be successful over other species.[57]

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[54]Ibid., passim.

[55]Lester F. Ward, Glimpses of the Cosmos, V (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1917), p. 23.

[56]Ibid., p. 24.

[57]John Dewey, rev. of Lester F. Ward, Psychic Factors of Civilization, Psychological Review, July, 1894, p. 405.

Dewey was also in total agreement with Ward's view of the importance of mind, that being, because of the evolution of mind man no longer had to solve problems by trial and error. He could see the future and intuitively predict what effect a course of action would have. Dewey in essence agreed with Ward's principle of the importance of the telic mind of man and the concept of the idea of Progress.[58]

The central point of agreement between Dewey and Ward, however, was Dewey's defense of Ward's views concerning a scientifically directed cooperative society that would continuously generate social progress. In relation to this concept and in defense of Wardian social philosophy, Dewey said:

> The ordinary biological theory of society does not see beyond the egoistic, exclusive development of intelligence. Its practical conclusions are, therefore, all in the direction of laissez-faire. But a psychological theory must recognize the change in the conditions of evolution wrought by the development of the non-personal, objective power of intelligence. True legislation is simply the application in the sphere of social forces of the principle of invention--of objective coordination with a view to increase of efficiency, and preventing needless waste and friction. Given a social science and a psychology as far advanced as present physical science, and laissez-faire in society becomes as absurd as would be the refusal to use knowledge of mechanical energy in the direction of steam and electricity.[59]

The Deweyan-Wardian concept of the telic mind of man being the director of social evolution was in direct opposition to Herbert Spencer's concept of social evolution that was so popular in America during the latter part of the nineteenth century.[60]

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[58]Ibid., pp. 405-406.

[59]Ibid., p. 406.

[60]Lawrence A. Cremin, The Transformation of the School (New York: Vintage Book, 1964), pp. 96-100.

The Spencerian Antithesis

The philosophy of Herbert Spencer was popular in the United States toward the end of the 1880's.[61] According to Lawrence A. Cremin:

> No philosopher seemed to promise greater hope or deeper insight into the mysteries of the universe for post-Civil War Americans. His first book, Social Statics (1850), was known and discussed in the United States almost as soon as it was published; and with the appearance of . . . Synthetic Philosophy . . . (1862), his influence grew steadily, reaching a peak in 1882 when he came to America for a series of lectures and celebrations in his honor.[62]

Spencer's main thesis was that history was the adjustment of human character to the circumstances of living. He believed that progress was possible; that man would tend toward perfection, but that this progress and perfection would be determined by history and natural law not by the planning mind of man.[63]

Influenced by Robert Malthus' theory of overpopulation, Spencer asserted that the pressure of subsistence upon populations was beneficial to the progress of the human race. The fittest of each generation survived by their skill, intelligence, diligence, and ability to adapt to change. As a result of the competition for survival, the more intelligent and adaptive individuals would inherit the earth, populating it with equally intelligent and effective offspring.[64]

Within the construct of this type of thought Spencer's ideas concerning education strictly adhered to his overall concept of the universal principle of nature; slow natural change. In his Social Statics, Spencer said:

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[61]Ibid., p. 91. [62]Ibid. [63]Ibid., p. 93.

[64]Gerald L. Gutek, A History of the Western Educational Experience (New York: Random House, 1972), p. 256.

> Somewhat like this childish impatience is the feeling exhibited by not a few state-educationists. Both they and their type show a lack of faith in natural forces--almost an ignorance that there are such forces. In both there is the same dissatisfaction with the normal rate of progress. And by both, artificial means are used to remedy what are conceived to be Nature's failures. Within these few years men have been awakened to the importance of instructing the people. That to which they were awhile since indifferent, or even hostile, has suddenly become an object of enthusiasm. With all the ardour of recent converts--with all a novice's inordinate expectations--with all the eagerness of a lately-aroused desire--do they await the hoped for result; and are dissatisfied because the progress from general ignorance to universal culture has not been achieved in a generation. One would have thought it sufficiently clear to everybody that the great changes taking place in this world of ours are uniformly slow.[65]

Spencer's concept of progress was based on the idea that natural evolution was applicable both to the natural world and society:

> Continents are upheaved at the rate of a foot or two in a century. The deposition of a delta is the work of tens of thousands of years. The transformation of barren rock into life-supporting soil takes countless ages. If any think society advances under a different law, let them read. Did it nor require nearly the whole Christian era to abolish slavery and serfdom in Europe? Did not a hundred generations live and die while picture-writing grew into printing? Have not science and commerce and mechanical skill increased at a similarly tardy pace? Yet are men disappointed that a pitiful fifty years has not sufficed for popular enlightenment! Although within this period an advance has been made far beyond what the past rate of progress in human affairs seemed to prophesy; yet do these impatient people condemn the voluntary system as a failure! A natural process--a process of self-unfolding which the national mind had commenced, is pooh-poohed because it has not wrought a transformation in the course of what constitutes but a day in the life of humanity! And then, to make up for Nature's incompetence, the unfolding must be hastened by legislative fingerlings![66]

Unlike Ward and later Dewey, Spencer did not view education as a means to bring about progress in society:

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[65]Herbert Spencer, Social Statics (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1892), pp. 169-170.

[66]Ibid., p. 170.

> The fact is, that scarcely any connection exists between morality and . . . teaching. Mere culture of the intellect (and education as usually conducted amounts to little more) is hardly at all operative upon conduct. Creeds pasted upon the mind, good principles learnt . . . lessons in right and wrong, will not eradicate vicious propensities; though people, in spite of their experience . . . persist in hoping they will. Intellect is not a power but an instrument--not a thing which itself moves and works, but a thing which is moved and worked by forces behind it. To say that men are ruled by reason is as irrational as to say that men are ruled by their eyes.[67]

Spencer's philosophy was based upon an idea of progress. His concept, however, was rooted in the idea that human social progress would occur through the normal process of evolution. Two central ideas in Spencer's social philosophy were that the mind of man should not interfere in this normal process, and that education was not a key in bringing about social progress. Spencer's philosophy was in direct opposition to the philosophy and idea of Progress expressed by Ward and Dewey. First Ward, and later Dewey, rooted their idea of Progress in the concepts that (1) man's mind was telic and therefore should plan and direct future social evolution, and (2) that education was a tool to be used to ameliorate the human social condition. The Spencerian idea of Progress was antithetical to the Wardian-Deweyan idea of Progress.[68]

## SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY

Dewey's social philosophy was rooted in his general concept of the meaning that philosophy had taken on since the work of Bacon and Darwin. Philosophers could no longer seek answers to absolute questions but must deal with concrete and specific questions arising out of social conflicts. Given this definition, philosophy and social philosophy were

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[67]Ibid., p. 173.

[68]Cremin, op. cit., pp. 98-99.

synonymous, and as such could not deal with absolutes. Social philosophy could not be based upon an absolute a priori concept, but had to be rooted in concrete problems.[69]

In Reconstruction in Philosophy, Dewey began the section on social philosophy by stating the three then current positions on social philosophy:

> As far as fundamentals are concerned, every view and combination appears to have been formulated already. Society is composed of individuals: this obvious and basic fact no philosophy, whatever its pretensions to novelty, can question or alter. Hence these three alternatives: Society must exist for the sake of individuals; or individuals must have their ends and ways of living set for them by society; or else society and individuals are correlative, organic, to one another, society requiring the service and subordination of individuals and at the same time existing to serve them.[70]

Dewey, however, took issue with these three positions because according to him, they ". . . suffer from a common defect. They are all committed to the logic of general notions under which specific situations are to be brought."[71]

These positions, as presented, were absolute answers; they were not dealing with specific concrete problems, their authors emphasized generalities such as the state, the individual, and the nature of institutions as such. That, according to Dewey, was not the function of social philosophy. Social philosophers were to deal with particular perplexities in domestic life.[72]

As Dewey said:

> They [the three social philosophic positions] are general answers supposed to have a universal meaning that covers and dominates all particulars. Hence they do not assist inquiry.

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[69]Dewey, Reconstruction in Philosophy, op. cit., pp. 26-27.

[70]Ibid., p. 187. [71]Ibid., p. 188. [72]Ibid., p. 189.

> They close it. They are not instrumentalities to be employed and tested in clarifying concrete social difficulties. They are ready-made principles to be imposed upon particulars in order to determine their nature. They tell us about the state when we want to know about some state. But the implication is that what is said about the state applies to any state that we happen to wish to know about.[73]

Dewey believed that these general concepts of social philosophy retarded social progress and inhibited social reforms because they were used by social philosophers to justify the established order. In essence social philosophers dwelled in the region of their concepts and solved problems by the relationship of ideas. They should have supplied man with testable alternatives that could have been used in social reform projects.[74]

As Dewey said:

> . . . social theory . . . exists as an idle luxury rather than as a guiding method of inquiry and planning. In the question of method concerned with reconstruction of special situations rather than in any refinements in the general concepts of institutions, individuality, state, freedom, law, order, progress, etc. lies the true impact of philosophical reconstruction.[75]

To Dewey social philosophers made their biggest error by dealing with generalities when they should have functioned as scientists and concentrated upon concrete social problems that produced alternative testable hypotheses as answers to these problems. This, however, was not the only error they committed. Dewey also said that they assumed the existence of the concept of the essence of the individual.[76]

To Dewey the individual existed only in the physical sense. Individuality in a social or moral sense was a continuous process of

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[73]Dewey, Reconstruction in Philosophy, p. 188.

[74]Ibid., pp. 190-192. [75]Ibid., p. 193. [76]Ibid., pp. 193-194.

becoming that the social environment helped to create. The individual then to Dewey was never finalized. He was always in a process of becoming and the social environment was to be so constructed that it allowed for the continuous creative process to take place.[77]

The main function of social philosophers was to scientifically structure social environments so that individual creativity could take place. The social philosophers were to deal with concrete social arrangements and to predict specific causations and associations that would facilitate the continuous development of the individual.[78]

This individualistic creativity, however, was not to be in just any direction that the individual thought he would like to take. The growth of the individual was to be directed in a coherent way so that it became a power and not an exercise in capriciousness.[79]

Social philosophers were to evaluate the results of their hypothesis in relation to the types of capacities that were released during the process of individual creativity. If constructed human associations released such capacities as an awakened curiosity, intellectual searching, delicate sensitivities, appreciation, inventiveness, varied resourcefulness, the assumption of responsibility, the scientific mind and cooperativeness, the associations were to be considered moral or good because they led to continued progress and growth.[80]

Dewey's social philosophy was based on the idea of Progress defined as man planning and directing his own social evolution. Social philosophers were to act as scientists who defined, isolated, and

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[77]Ibid., p. 194.

[78]Ibid., p. 197.

[79]Ibid.

[80]Ibid., pp. 194-197.

presented alternatives to concrete social problems so that a society would be created that allowed for the development and release of the capacity for individual creativity.[81]

## SOCIAL GOALS

Dewey rejected the notion that the processes of society had any preconceived or fixed determinate end, conservative or radical. But, he did not deny, in fact he took for granted, that the processes of society should be intended to bring about the formation of dispositions, and that the formation of such dispositions was intended to have certain results.[82]

To Dewey, the prime dispositions to be formed were the "inquiring mind" and "cooperative attitude" so that experimental knowledge would be a guide to pursue other social goals. These other social goals were two in number: (1) to release personal creative potentialities and (2) to bring about the development of a bettered community life, the general welfare, the common good, or the improvement of man's estate.[83]

To Dewey, one goal of the state, composed of social philosophers, was to use experimental knowledge to help human associations grow to their fullest capacity. As Dewey said:

> Political parties, industrial corporations, scientific and artistic organizations, trade unions, churches, schools, clubs and societies without number, exist for the cultivation

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[81]Ibid., p. 197.

[82]William K. Frankena, Three Historical Philosophies of Education (Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1965), p. 156.

[83]Ibid.

> of every conceivable interest that men have in common. As they develop in number and importance, the state tends to become more and more a regulator and adjuster among them; defining the limits of their actions, preventing and settling conflicts.
>
> Its "supremacy" approximates that of the conductor of an orchestra, who makes no music himself but who harmonizes the activities of those who in producing it are doing the thing intrinsically worthwhile.[84]

As the state harmonized and orchestrated the relationships among human associations so that human creative capacities were released, the guideline that the state was to follow in ordering conflicts was Dewey's second social goal; the amelioration of the human estate. If associations released capacities that led to amelioration they were considered to be good or moral associations.[85]

This second goal, at which the release of capacities was to be aimed, included the conviction of the possibility of the control of nature in the interests of mankind, and thus was to lead man to look toward the future. Man was to consider himself as the director of his own future social evolution, and was to develop the idea that the use of science and the scientific method would subjugate disease, abolish poverty, and ameliorate all other human suffering.[86]

Dewey's social goals were based on the idea that man should produce an intelligent, scientific minded, cooperative citizenry who were convinced of the efficacy of the idea of Progress and who sought continual growth toward the amelioration of the human condition.[87]

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[84]Dewey, Reconstruction in Philosophy, op. cit., p. 203.

[85]Ibid., pp. 198-204.

[86]John Dewey, Democracy and Education (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1916), pp. 224-225.

[87]Ibid., pp. 223-228.

## CURRICULUM THEORY

Dewey's curriculum theory was based on his social philosophy and social goals. He conceived the school to be like a social community and, like society in general, the school was to strive to foster those dispositions and ends that were associated with his social philosophy and goals.[88] He wrote:

> A society is a number of people held together because they are working along common lines, in a common spirit, and with reference to common aims. The common needs and aims demand a growing interchange of thought and growing unity of sympathetic feelings. The radical reason that the school cannot organize itself as a natural social unit is because just this element of common and productive activity is absent.[89]

According to Dewey, the main purpose of the school was to show that:

> . . . a social order different in quality and direction from the present is desirable . . . to educate with social change in view by producing individuals not complacent about what already exists, and equipped with desires and abilities to assist in transforming it. . . .[90]

Katherine Camp Mayhew, a teacher in the Laboratory School, said that Dewey's curriculum theory was based on the idea that the school was to be a community of cooperating individuals engaged in common activities whereby they could use the scientific method to solve problems and learn the methods and thoughts behind the idea of reconstructing society for the betterment of humanity.[91]

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[88]John Dewey, The School and Society (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1900), p. 14.

[89]Ibid.

[90]John Dewey, "Progressive Education and the Science of Education," Progressive Education, V, 2 (1928), 200.

[91]Katherine Camp Mayhew and Anna Camp Edwards, The Dewey School (New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, Inc., 1936), p. 9.

Dewey believed that he lived in a time that was the dawn of a new age. He believed that the industrial revolution was an historical occurrence that was revolutionizing all of human life. As he said: "One can hardly believe that there has been a revolution in all history so rapid, so extensive, so complete. Through it the face of the earth is making over . . ."[92]

To Dewey the school could not afford to ignore this great revolutionary occurrence. The school must respond to this happening, and educators must design the curriculum to take into account the ramifications of a social scene subject to constant change. The way educators were to respond, was to design the curriculum around life-occupations which were the physical realities of life. The curriculum was to be designed around the subject concepts of manual training, shopwork, and the household arts such as sewing and cooking.[93]

These subjects, however, were not to be taught as separate studies:

> We must conceive of them in their social significance, as types of the processes by which society keeps itself going, as agencies for bringing home to the child some of the primal necessities of community life, and as ways in which these needs have been met by the growing insight and ingenuity of man; in short as instrumentalities through which the school itself shall be made a genuine form of active community life, instead of a place set apart in which to learn lessons.[94]

The core of the curriculum was to be the historical development of man as he interacted with his environment; solved the problems of survival through his innate ingenuity, and developed life occupations to overcome nature and improve the human condition.[95]

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[92]John Dewey, The School and Society, op. cit., p. 9.

[93]Ibid., pp. 10-14. [94]Ibid., p. 14. [95]Ibid., p. 19.

The Role of the Teacher

The role of the teacher, in Dewey's concept of the school, was that of the social philosopher. The teacher did not dispense knowledge but acted as a guide to construct a learning environment that would release the individual creative capacities of the students. Or, in other words, the teacher was to create opportunities for the student to learn, to gain knowledge, and to acquire socially desirable attitudes and habits.[96]

He stated:

> The method of the teacher . . . becomes a matter of finding the conditions which call out self-educative activity, or learning, and of cooperating with the activities of the pupils so that they have learning as their consequence.[97]

Learning, however, and the release of individual creative capacities was not to be at the whim of the student, but was to be directed by the teacher toward those social dispositions and goals that Dewey believed led to the continuous progress of the species. Dewey said:

> A child's individuality cannot be found in what he does or in what he consciously likes at a given moment; it can only be found in the connected course of his actions. Consciousness of desire and purpose can be genuinely attained only toward the close of some fairly prolonged sequence of activities. Consequently, some organization of subject-matter reached through a serial or consecutive course of doing, held together within the unity of progressively growing occupation or projects, is the only means which corresponds to real individuality.[98]

Acting as true social philosophers teachers were to construct learning environments that would lead to the forming of proper social

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[96]John Dewey, "Progressive Education and the Science of Education," op. cit., p. 204.

[97]Ibid.

[98]Ibid., p. 201.

dispositions, such as, creativity, cooperation, sensitivity, intellectual searching, the scientific mind, inventiveness and continuous curiosity. They were then to evaluate the results of their design in relation to the stated social dispositions and goals. If the design, or hypothesis, of a learning environment formed stated dispositions it was evaluated in a positive fashion and retained. If, however, it did not form the stated dispositions it was to be evaluated in a negative fashion and rejected. By this method teachers were to guide the students' education, function as true social philosophers, and develop an ever-progressing school community based on scientific principles.[99]

Curriculum of the Laboratory School

The "Laboratory School" was established by Dewey at the University of Chicago, and was to function as an experimental laboratory where he could test his educational theories much as scientific theories were tested in biology, physics, and chemistry laboratories. The school functioned during the years 1896 to 1904.[100]

The history of the school, and the relationship between the school's curriculum theory and Dewey's philosophy of Experimentalism, were written by Katherine Camp Mayhew and Anna Camp Edwards in a book called The Dewey School. In relation to the accuracy of this book, Dewey said:

> The account of the Laboratory School contained in the pages that follow is so adequate as to render it unnecessary for me to add anything to what is said about its origin, aims, and methods. It is, however, a grateful task to express my appreciation of the intelligent care with which the theory and practice of the school have been reported. Because of their long connection with the school, the authors have a

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[99]Ibid., p. 204.

[100]Mayhew, op. cit., p. 3.

> first-hand knowledge, while their responsible share in the work of the school has enabled them to make an authoritative statement of its underlying ideas, its development, and the details of its operation.[101]

The aim of educators was to discover and apply the principles that governed all human development. They were then to utilize these methods by which mankind had collectively and progressively advanced in skill, understanding, and associated life to educate the child.[102]

Ages four through six. The earliest part of the curriculum, that related to the four-, five-, and six-year-old groups, began with the most familiar in the experience of the child; the occupations of the home. The main concept behind this part of the curriculum was to begin to form in the child the dispositions of group cooperativeness and the rudiments of problem solving.[103]

The curriculum for the four- and five-year-olds was centered around two main activities: (1) the preparation of a household meal, usually the noon meal, and (2) the construction of a miniature community with particular emphasis on the building of a large house.[104] The preparation of the meal was used as a method whereby the children learned how to cooperate for the attainment of a common goal. The children prepared the food, set the table, washed the dishes and performed all other tasks associated with the overall preparation of a large meal. The fundamentals of learning such as mathematics and

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[101]John Dewey, "Introduction," in The Dewey School, by Katherine Camp Mayhew and Anna Camp Edwards (New York: D. Appleton Century Company, Inc., 1936), p. xiii.

[102]Mayhew, op. cit., p. 6.

[103]Ibid., p. 71.

[104]Ibid., pp. 66-68.

language arts were integrated into this project. The children learned mathematics by counting utensils, chairs, dishes, and various other objects. They learned language arts by naming and describing articles of food and various other objects associated with the project. The overall purpose, however, was to develop the cooperative spirit within the group.[105]

The building of a miniature community had as its purpose the use of the scientific method to solve concrete problems associated with the everyday experiences of the child. The children built the roads, located the buildings and constructed all objects associated with a typical small community.[106]

The scientific method was necessarily employed in order for the children to solve the problems of where to locate things, and how to build objects. The cooperative attitude was reinforced because the children worked together at solving the major project problems. The fundamentals of learning were integrated into the project, as the children learned mathematics through measurement, and language arts through the naming and describing of objects. They also learned the fundamental uses of tools, and some basic geography associated with the origin of materials.[107]

During the construction of the projects, the children took trips into the community to visit various places such as the post office, grocery stores, museums, and various other public places. The purpose behind these visits was to help the children use their powers of observation. They learned what these public buildings were

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[105]Ibid., p. 66. [106]Ibid., p. 68. [107]Ibid.

like. They used these observations as models upon which to construct their miniature town.[108]

The fundamental task of the teacher was to function as a guide and organizer for the group; she removed objects that blocked the success of the children and suggested new methods of attack when interest lagged.[109] By the end of this learning event the children became members of a group. They learned the rudiments of cooperation, and something of the pleasures of sharing. They learned to begin to investigate and experiment, in order to solve a problem that was related to their own purpose. They began to become cooperative, scientific minded beings with a purpose and a desire to overcome obstacles to achieve that purpose.[110]

At the end of each quarter, the teacher reported her results to her colleagues. They worked as a group to evaluate the success or failure of certain projects, suggested revisions, and continued the scientific development of the learning environment.[111]

Curriculum, age seven. The name given to this curriculum segment was "Progress Through Invention and Discovery." The purpose of this curriculum project was to trace the history of man from earliest time up to the period of written history. This was to show how man progressed through the uses of the methods of invention and discovery. The main emphasis was on the idea that man could be the director of his own future, that he could overcome nature and better his social life by his own efforts.[112] The children assumed the role of a primitive tribe and

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[108]Ibid., pp. 68-69. [109]Ibid., p. 68.

[110]Ibid., p. 73. [111]Ibid., p. 70. [112]Ibid., p. 95.

were set to discover how primitive man had to invent in order to survive. In the process many scientific facts about geology, chemistry, biology, physics, and geography were learned.[113]

Katherine C. Mayhew wrote:

> In addition to such a view of geography in a human setting gained through constant dramatization of imagined situations and behavior, these children had an early glimpse into the beginnings of the social organization of tribal life. . . . Certain definite associations were built up between people, their social life, and the land they occupied. Ideas were gained as to a gradual progress in man's way of living--his forms of shelter, his clothing, and kinds of food as well as of the part that invention and discovery had played in this development.[114]

As in the earlier curriculum segment, the children were put into situations whereby they had to invent, experiment, and cooperate in order to solve problems. The fundamentals of learning mathematics, reading, and language arts were integrated into the curriculum project centered around historical development.[115]

The entire curriculum project was designed to develop those dispositions and goals that Dewey associated with an ever-progressing society. The children not only learned these dispositions, but were shown a view of history depicting man as a progressive being overcoming nature by invention and thereby bettering his social existence.[116]

Curriculum, age eight. The name given to this segment of the curriculum was "Progress Through Exploration and Discovery." The project centered around the trading and maritime activities of the Phoenicians, their

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[113]Mayhew, The Dewey School, p. 113.

[114]Ibid., pp. 113-114.

[115]Ibid., p. 115.

[116]Ibid., pp. 115-116.

exploration of the Mediterranean basin, commerce with their various outstanding settlements, and then moved on to the larger topic of world exploration and discovery.[117]

The Phoenician civilization was chosen as an area of study because it was thought it represented a progressive quality, an ongoing, out-flowing, and developing way of living that followed naturally from the previous year of study.[118]

In relation to this cognitive link, Mayhew explained:

> In previous years these children had gained a working knowledge of some of the occupations and social relationships of present life and an idea of how the present had come to be, through their study of primitive life. They had seen that any change of the physical situation of a tribal group necessitated and conditioned a revision of its social program and a redistribution of individual duties. Further, it was only through the invention of devices which made for better living conditions, more efficient weapons for defense and the getting of food, that man had come to a more settled and secure way of living.[119]

According to Mayhew the American Indian civilization had been selected as an area of study in previous years, and although the children learned much about problem solving and cooperation, the teachers believed that this civilization was too static to convey the idea of Progress to the children.[120] This was also the year that the children began a serious study of reading, writing, and numbers, a study of the Phoenician civilization that had spread these conveniences seemed to the teachers to be particularly appropriate.[121] To begin the study the teachers told the children what the physical attributes of the Phoenician environment were; with the sea in front and the mountains behind. They let the students develop answers as to how this

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[117]Ibid., p. 117. [118]Ibid., p. 118.

[119]Ibid., pp. 117-118. [120]Ibid., p. 118. [121]Ibid.

civilization made its living.[122] The children eventually settled on the idea that the Phoenicians used the mountains to mine metals. They used the sea to establish contact with other tribes to trade their metals for other goods. Through this method the children developed the idea of how a trading civilization developed methods of verbal and numerical records in order to keep a history of their trades and agreements.[123] The children actually went through many of the processes. They built boats, dramatized bartering situations, developed an alphabet and numerical system beginning with pictorials and ending with symbolization. The teacher during this process functioned as a guide and helped keep the children along the correct historical path.[124]

On the integration of history, problem solving, progress, and manual training, Mayhew said:

> The main purpose of the work was to stimulate the children's minds to study and, . . . to seek solutions for certain of the problems of the Phoenician type of civilization that must be solved in order that progress in comfort and convenience in living might be made. Thus the children carried out inquiry into the origin of products and the development of processes which have transformed modes of living from primitive crude forms to the present. The sort of houses that they as a Phoenician tribe should build was discussed, and it was decided that stone might be used. . . . The question of how it could be made to stick together was brought up and led to a discussion of lime in its native state and its use as mortar. The children then turned into masons, made mortar boxes, trowels, and a sand seive in the shop. Lime was produced, and experiments were carried on to demonstrate the effect of water upon it. Mortar was made and used to build the walls of a typical house of that time and region. A bridge was necessary to cross a ravine; bricks were made from clay; and the bridge built in the form of a keystone arch.[125]

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[122]Mayhew, The Dewey School, p. 119

[123]Ibid.

[124]Ibid., pp. 119-120.

[125]Ibid., p. 123.

From the study of the Phoenicians, the children branched out into the study of the age of exploration. They studied the voyages of Columbus, Prince Henry of Portugal, and Magellan. The children always studied these historical events from the point of view of dramatization and problem solving. They developed methods of shipbuilding, navigation, solved the problems of geometry associated with exploration, and considered the social problems these men faced. They learned about geography, geology, currents, and economics. But most of all they learned how man solved problems, by actually solving these problems themselves, and how man used this technique to ameliorate the human condition.[126]

As a part of the processes of dramatization and the problem solving associated with these historical events, the children kept a written record of their experiences as explorers and by this method learned new words and language arts. During this whole curriculum project the children were also involved in a collateral reading of the book, Robinson Crusoe, which helped to reinforce the concept that man could conquer nature, and ameliorate his own condition, through his powers of invention and ingenuity.[127]

The same methods of instruction were employed with the nine-to eleven-year-old groups. The historical setting with these groups was colonial history and local history. It was with the twelve-year-old group that the basic methodology changed and the curriculum became more subject-matter centered.[128]

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[126]Ibid., p. 131.

[127]Ibid., p. 133.

[128]Ibid., pp. 199-200.

Specialized Activities

The twelve-year-old group concentrated upon science and used the evolution of the earth as the thread that ran through the entire curriculum. Beginning with theories on the origin of the earth, the children considered problems of chemistry, geology, biology, and ecology. They used the laboratory to conduct experiments to prove or disprove some of the basic scientific facts related to the theories they were considering. The eventual outcome of this curriculum was to extrapolate all this information into geography; to see how the world had come to be, why minerals were where they were and how and why civilizations had developed in certain places and not others. The end product was to develop the concept that man and his society evolved and changed because man was a species interrelated with his environment, who solved the problems of that environment in order to progress.[129]

The Essence of the Experimentalist Curriculum Theory

The curriculum theory associated with the educational philosophy of Experimentalism was designed to provide the student with the elements of the scientific method.[130] According to Mayhew, these elements were:

> . . . that the pupil, or research worker, have a genuine situation of experience--that there be a continuous activity in which he is interested for its own sake; secondly, that a genuine problem develop within this situation as a stimulus to thought; third that he possess the information and make the observations needed to deal with it; fourth, that suggested solutions occur to him which he shall be responsible for developing in an orderly way; fifth, that he have opportunity and occasion to test his ideas by application, to make their meaning clear, and to discover for himself their validity.[131]

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[129]Ibid., pp. 218-219.

[130]Ibid., p. 140.

[131]Ibid.

The underlying concept behind this curriculum theory was the idea of Progress. Through the use of the historic approach and problem solving, the student could see and experience the advances made by man as he conquered nature by invention.[132] As Mayhew explained:

> This sort of dramatic play cannot fail to make clear the way invention reacts upon life and calls into play new powers of both individuals and groups, new ways of cooperation and association, and leads to the use of natural objects and the control of forces hitherto unmastered.[133]

John Dewey's philosophic thought was based on a trust in man's essential goodness; a belief in human perfectability through education; a conviction that man had the capacity to organize his life intelligently to eliminate evil and injustice all of which would lead to an ordered, growing, and rich society.[134]

To Dewey, education was the fundamental method of social progress and reform. The core of his belief was the idea of Progress; the concept that through education society could formulate its own purposes, could organize its own means and resources, and thus shape itself with definiteness and economy in the direction in which it wished to move.[135] The teachers would function as dedicated social philosophers, who constructed a scientific curriculum theory intended to form certain intellectual and social dispositions in the students. They were to use

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[132]Ibid., p. 98.

[133]Ibid.

[134]Saul K. Padover, The Genius of America (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1960), p. 285.

[135]John Dewey, "My Pedagogic Creed," Foundations of Education in America, ed. James Wm. Noll and Sam P. Kelly (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, Inc., 1970), pp. 242-243.

the school as a vehicle toward social reform and the amelioration of of the human condition. Thus by this philosophy, theory, and method the school and the teachers were to become the prophets of the true God and were to usher in the true kingdom of God.[136]

## SUMMARY

John Dewey blended the idealistic philosophy of Hegel with the metaphysical position of positivism as it had evolved from the thoughts of Bacon, Comte, Darwin, and Ward. This blending led to the philosophic school of thought called Experimentalism that included as one of its ingredients the idea of Progress. Dewey's main emphasis was on the positivistic concept, but he retained a touch of Hegelian idealism represented by the process of historism (Figure 3).

Influenced by Ward's telic mind concept, Dewey in his social philosophy, represented man as a planning social philosopher who used the means of the scientific method and social cooperation to seek the goals of amelioration, release of individual capacities and the continued growth of both of these goals (Figure 4). This Wardian-Deweyan concept of the idea of Progress, based as it was upon the planning mind of man, was the antithesis to the Spencerian concept of the idea of Progress that was based on the law of natural selection.

Dewey sought to implement his social philosophy and goals through an educational plan with a curriculum theory that was based on the idea of Progress. He conceived of the school as a scientific, cooperative society of teachers functioning as social philosophers,

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[136]Ibid., p. 243.

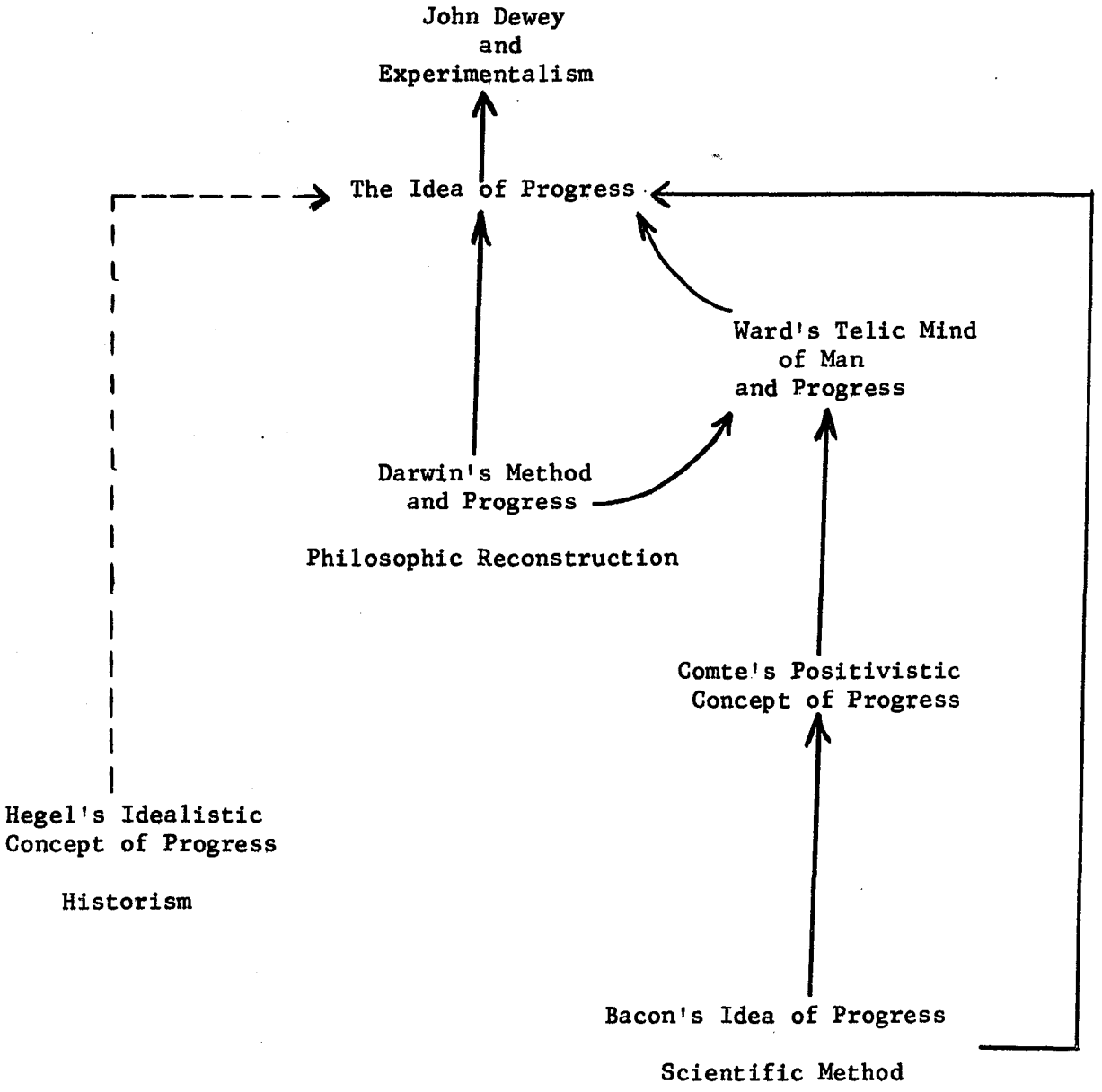
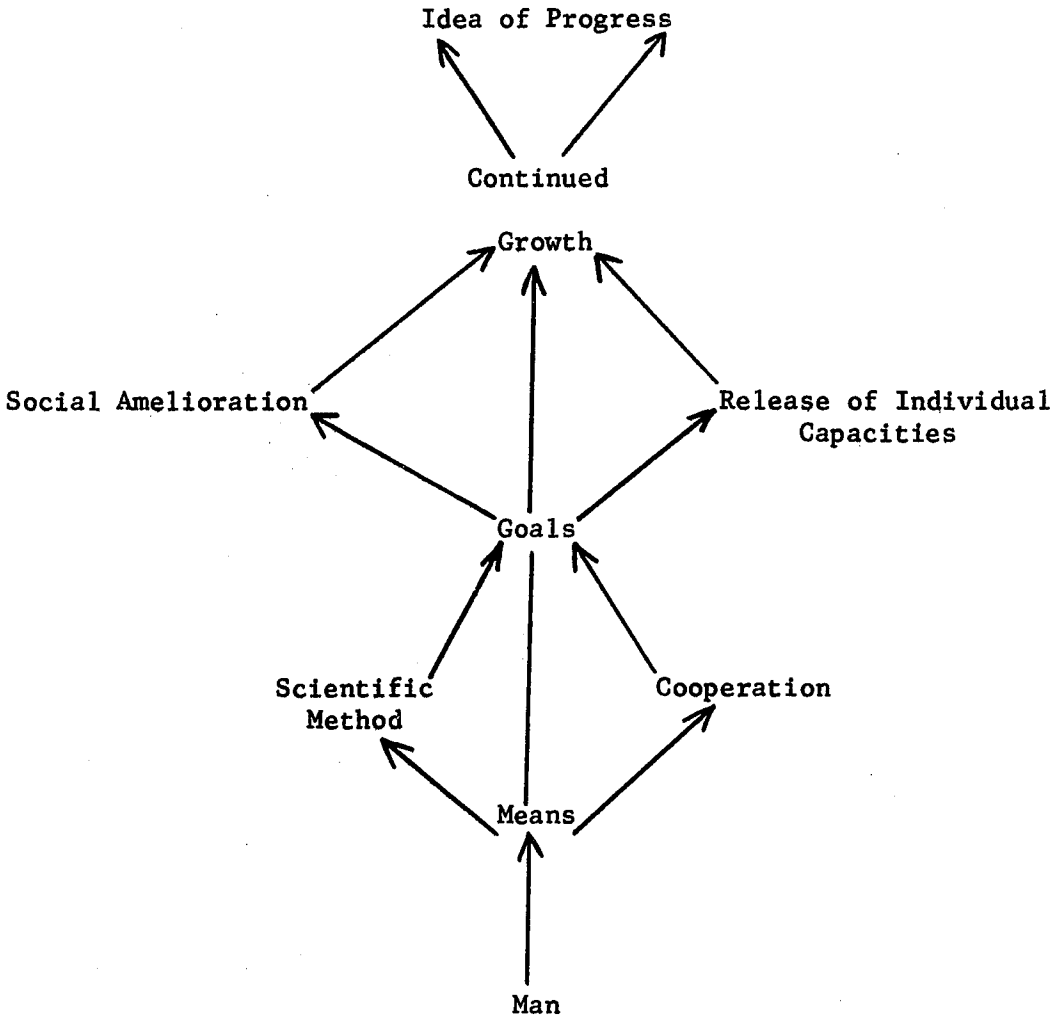



Figure 3

Dewey Experimentalism and the Idea of Progress




The Planning Social Philosopher

Figure 4

Dewey's Social Philosophy and Goals

and students functioning as research workers having as their goal the continued reform of society toward social amelioration. The core of the curriculum was the concept of the historical development of the occupations of man as he progressed through time, through the use of the methods of invention and discovery to ameliorate his social condition (Figure 5). It was Dewey's plan to use the project method of instruction, and the history of man as a progressive being to instill in the students' minds the idea that by cooperating with one another, they could be the directors of social evolution.

It was Dewey's belief that when educators adopted his philosophy of Experimentalism, and his curriculum theory based on the idea of Progress, man would truly become the planner and director of his own social evolution and progress.

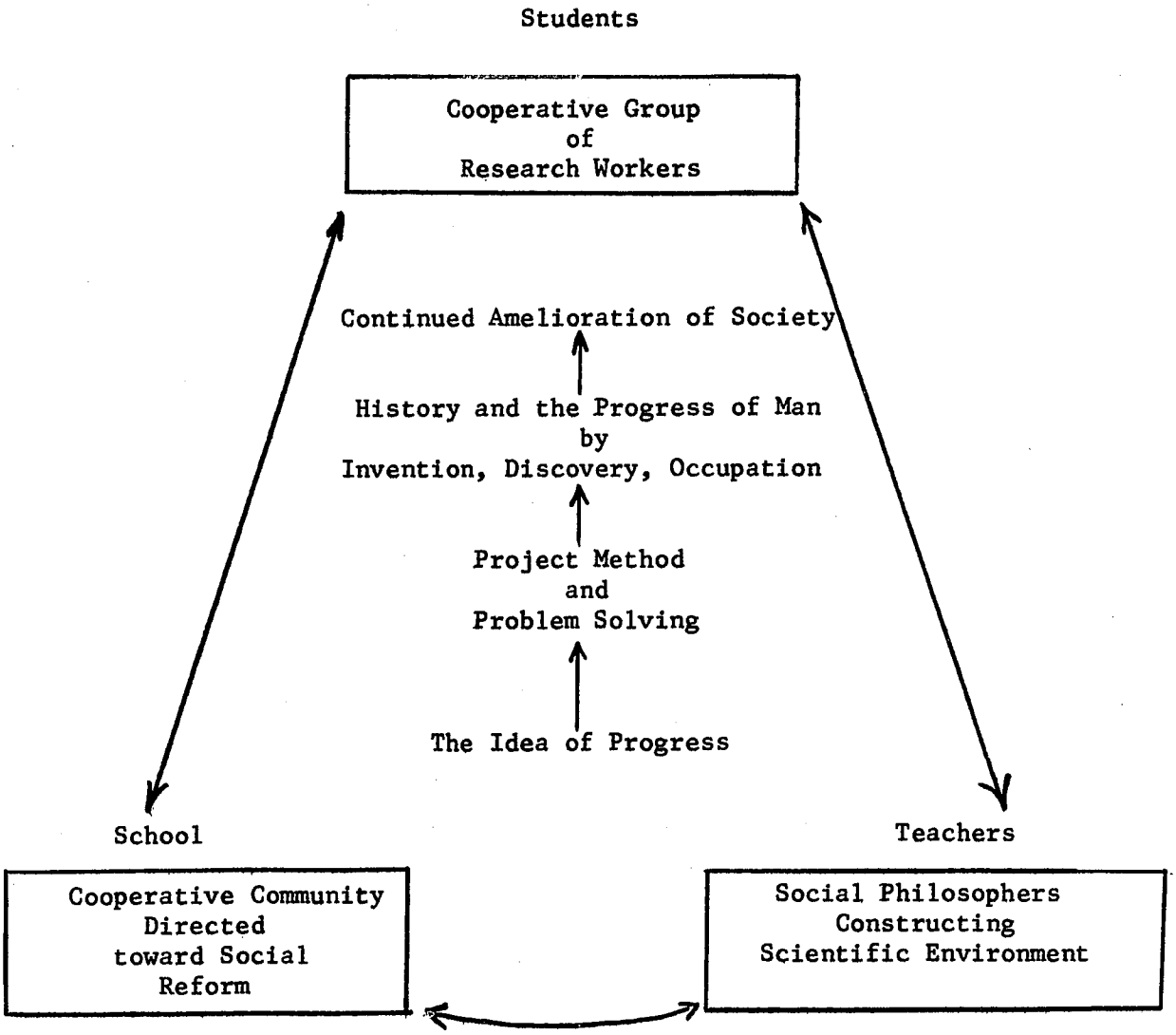



Figure 5

Dewey's Curriculum Theory and the Idea of Progress

Chapter 5

# RECONSTRUCTIONISM

## INTRODUCTION

It was John Dewey who suggested the term Reconstructionism as a philosophic concept in his 1920 book Reconstruction in Philosophy. Thinkers, led by George Counts and Harold Rugg, first applied the term to educational theory. This group called on educators to lead the way toward the creation of a new and more equitable society.[1]

The reconstructionist movement originated in February of 1932 when Counts addressed the twelfth annual meeting of the Progressive Education Association in Baltimore, Maryland. In his address "Dare Progressive Education be Progressive?" Counts censured progressive educators because he believed that they had failed to develop a positive social program in response to the economic depression. He called upon the progressives to define their purposes, to face current social problems, and to fashion a realistic and comprehensive theory of social welfare which would make the movement genuinely forward moving.[2]

Later in the same year Counts enlarged his audience when he published the paper Dare the School Build a New Social Order? The words in Counts' messages of 1932 revealed the hopes, fears, and

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[1]George F. Kneller (ed.), Foundations of Education (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1971), p. 247.

[2]Gerald L. Gutek, The Educational Theory of George S. Counts (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1970), p. 62.

disappointments of the depression-ridden generation of American educators. The messages so shook the Progressive Education Association that it established a committee to promote within the schools thoughtful and systematic study of the economic and industrial problems that confronted the world.[3]

In March of 1933, the committee headed by Counts reported to the board of directors of the Progressive Education Association. The report, published as A Call to the Teachers of the Nation, urged recognition of the corporate and interdependent character of the contemporary social order and recommended the transference of the democratic traditions from individualistic to collectivistic economic foundations. The report called for the abandonment of laissez-faire and pleaded for bold social experimentation.[4]

To the board of directors of the Progressive Education Association the committee's report had gone too far. It considered the report too radical and although the report was published, the board disclaimed any relationship between it and the Progressive Education Association.[5]

Since the Progressive Education Association failed to commit itself to a deliberate program of social inquiry and reconstruction Counts, Rugg, Dewey, and others established their own organization, and published their own journal called the Social Frontier. The editors of the Social Frontier, which included Counts and Rugg, pretended no absolute objectivity or detachment. They held to a

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[3]Ibid., pp. 63-69.

[4]Ibid., p. 70.

[5]Ibid., p. 71.

definite point of view that included: (1) preservation of the ideals of freedom of speech, cultural diversity, personal liberty, security, and dignity; (2) the establishment of democratic control over the material sources of life; (3) the use of education, schools, and teachers to clarify social issues and answers to these issues; and (4) to build a democratic collectivist social order based on a planned and unified direction.[6]

Initially the journal was a success, but after a short period of time the popular American press began to identify the editors of the Social Frontier with the world communist movement. The identification was based upon the facts that: (1) Counts had visited Russia and praised their system of planning and direction, and (2) the society's political stand on the future development of a system of democratic collectivism. The journal became unpopular. The last few issues were published in 1943 under the sole editorial direction of Rugg.[7]

For a period of time the reconstructionist philosophy of education was at a low ebb, even though Counts and Rugg continued to publish works related to their position. It was in 1956, however, that Theodore Brameld published Toward a Reconstructed Philosophy of Education and reawakened interest in the reconstructionist position in philosophy and education.[8]

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[6]Ibid., pp. 74-75.

[7]Ibid., pp. 77-78.

[8]Kneller, op. cit., p. 247.

## INTELLECTUAL ANTECEDENTS

### Harold Rugg [1886-1960]

Rugg, one of the early founders of the reconstructionist movement, contended that he lived in a transitional period of world-wide cultural transformation. It was a period in which social ideas and social practices changed rapidly. He believed that an intellectual revolution had occurred in the history of man that brought about this new age where man used the basic energy of the universe for his own purpose.[9]

According to Rugg the new age was characterized by the following types of thought:

1. A secular tendency in religion
2. Empiricism in outlook . . . .
3. Materialism
4. A scientific attitude and much praise . . . of science
5. Faith in man . . . .
6. Faith in machinery and physical production
7. Belief in material progress
8. Belief in democracy and education.[10]

To Rugg the thought of the new age could be used for the betterment of man or it could lead mankind into devastation. Only if man learned how to control and direct these forces in a cooperative and democratic way would the new age be truly productive and progressive.[11]

Rugg outlined his view of the history of Western thought to defend his idea that the new age was dominated by science and progress,

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[9]Harold Rugg and William Withers, Social Foundations of Education (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1955), p. v.

[10]Ibid., p. 48.

[11]Ibid., pp. v-vi.

and that man must be the director rather than the pawn of these forces.[12] He began his review of the history of Western thought with the ideas of St. Augustine during the Medieval period. According to Rugg, Augustine had put his main emphasis upon the spiritual and ideal over the physical and temporal. This type of thought took man's mind off of this world and set him to thinking only about life in another world. Augustine's thought was based on the concept of a static world devoid of the free will of man, where history was directed by God and truth was revealed only through God. This world concept was the antithesis of a world concept based on materialism, science, and progress.[13]

It was toward the end of the Medieval period that this view began to change particularly with the works of St. Thomas Aquinas. Aquinas blended Christian thought with that of Aristotle which presented man with a dual concept of the world. One part could be known through the senses and the normal functioning of the human mind; one could only be revealed by God and human faith in Him. According to Rugg, it was this type of thought that began to change the world. It formed the foundation for later scientific development and progress.[14]

In summarizing the thought of the Medieval period and the development of the idea of Progress, upon which his argument rested, Rugg said:

> Because of these attitudes, the medieval man abhorred change . . . . He did not think in terms of reform or social progress. The modern idea of progress would have been

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[12]Ibid., passim.

[13]Ibid., pp. 310-311.

[14]Ibid., p. 312-313.

> incomprehensible to him. The social and natural order . . . was perfect, could not be reformed, could not be improved upon.[15]

The social system of Europe changed, cities grew, and technology developed. As this occurred Medieval thought began to decline and science as a way of thought developed. The changed conditions eventually led to the works of Copernicus, Descartes, Bacon, and Newton and these works in turn changed man's thoughts about the universe, and ushered in a new age based on progress.[16] According to Rugg the thought of the new age produced the ideas that the individual was important, that man could succeed through his own self-reliance and that he could rely upon his own experience, observations, and intelligence, all of which were precursors to the modern idea of Progress.[17]

The scientific thought that developed from 1500 to 1800 presented a mechanical view of the universe. This view represented the universe as changing and progressive but ruled by mechanical natural laws. Man, through the process of rational thought, could understand the universe and its natural laws, but he was not to interfere with its natural development.[18] In relation to the scientific but mechanical view of the universe Rugg said:

> The universe and all its beings, human and inhuman, . . . , was a great machine running invariably and unalterably according to the law of motion implicit in the original design. It could not be changed, . . . , it was inexorable. Men could only accommodate themselves to it. It was like some roller coaster that could not be stopped. All men could do would be to jump on it and take a ride. But in doing this,

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[15]Rugg and Withers, Social Foundations of Education, p. 315.

[16]Ibid., pp. 318-320. [17]Ibid., p. 320. [18]Ibid., pp. 342-343.

> men could benefit and improve themselves . . . . The health, wealth and general welfare of men could be promoted by discovery of, and conformity to, natural law.[19]

The view was not unchallenged. Hegel in his philosophy presented man with a different concept of the universe. Hegel argued that society was not fixed, that it was tending toward perfection and that although there was progress, this progress was not mechanical, it was related to the ideas and ideals of man and the conflict generated by his thoughts.[20]

To Rugg it was Darwin's Origin of Species upon which the modern day concepts of progress had taken their divergent directions. Darwin's work was significant for two reasons: (1) the concept of natural selection working toward the progress of the species, and (2) the Darwinian method of finding truth, the scientific method.[21]

Spencer developed a school of thought that combined the mechanical view of the universe with Darwin's natural selection. This presented man with a social theory based upon individualism, laissez-faire, and capitalism. According to Rugg, Spencer's theory was ruthless, it prevented man from interfering with the natural law of the survival of the fittest.[22]

But there also developed a social theory, related to the work of Darwin, that put its main emphasis upon man using the Darwinian method to find truth and then applied this truth to social progress. This social theory was related to the works of Lester F. Ward.[23]

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[19]Ibid., p. 344.

[20]Ibid., p. 426.

[21]Ibid., p. 436.

[22]Ibid.

[23]Ibid., p. 441.

Later John Dewey combined the concept of man's interaction with his environment with the rise of scientific method to solve environmental problems. From these he developed a social theory truly based on the idea of Progress.[24] In relation to the ideas of Dewey, Rugg said:

> Dewey's view of society and life in general was one of process and growth toward chosen ends. He stressed the continuing importance of free will and, in a sense, his philosophy has been one of indeterminism and voluntarism. Dewey was in revolt against the certainty and static quality of earlier thought. Objectives and ends are a result of process and growth; they change with growth . . . . Individual goals become progressively and culturally determined as the individual grows in the culture. . . . Thus Dewey, more than anyone else, stressed the creative power of both intellect and the culture.[25]

Rugg, however, was not entirely satisfied with Dewey's thought because he wrote that Dewey had not been definite about the goals or ends for which man should strive.[26] Rugg found the bases of his thinking in the history of Western thought as it related to the development of the idea of Progress. It was to the Wardian-Deweyan line of thought, where they had represented man as the determiner of his own fate, using the scientific method, solving social problems and setting goals that Rugg turned in order to define the basis of his own thought.[27] To Rugg this was the only line of thought that was possible if man was to survive and solve the problems presented by the new age.[28]

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[24]Ibid., p. 445.

[25]Ibid.

[26]Ibid., p. 470.

[27]Ibid., pp. 441-445.

[28]Ibid., pp. v-vi.

George Counts [1889- ]

Counts' social and educational theory was based on a combination of the elements of evolutionary naturalism, experimentalism, political reformism, and utopianism.[29] Counts thought of man and society in evolutionary and functional terms. He conceived of human behavior as the product of an interaction between man and environment.[30]

Counts' reliance upon Darwin's evolutionary naturalism as a starting point for his own thoughts, was seen in his opening remarks in his Principles of Education. He wrote:

> Man in common with all living organisms, is compelled to bring himself into harmony with his surroundings. The penalty of extreme and long-continued failure to make the larger adjustments is death; the penalty of failure to make the smaller adjustments is arrest of growth. Man is goaded into the external vigilance which characterizes living by the punishments and rewards which attend his action.[31]

He did not, however, end his thinking at this point, but acknowledged the influence that Dewey's educational thought and Ward's social philosophy had upon him.[32] Counts, like Dewey and Ward, saw man in Darwinian terms but also like them he saw man as a molder and changer of his environment. Using the Wardian-Deweyan concept of the idea of Progress Counts said:

> The term "adjustment" as commonly employed may easily carry too narrow a meaning. While in the case of the animal the process may be regarded as consisting essentially of a "fitting into" the environment, in the case of man, . . . such a simple statement is apt to be misleading. Adjustment

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[29]Gutek, op. cit., p. 229. [30]Ibid.

[31]George S. Counts and J. Crosby Chapman, Principles of Education (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1924), p. 3.

[32]Ibid., p. xiv.

> is something more than the forcing of a plastic and passive individual into agreement with a fixed and unchangeable environment. The animal, owing to its small capacity for altering the external conditions of life, is forced into the simple type of adjustment and accepts nature as it is. But in man adaptation involves much more, including not only the changing of the individual to fit the environment, but also the most thoroughgoing attempts on his part to change the conditions under which he lives.[33]

Counts saw man as a biological organism changing with his changing environment but also man must be seen as Ward and Dewey saw him; as one who modified his environment to further his own chosen ends.[34] Counts unlike Dewey held to a specific concept of the type of society that man should build. Influenced by Edward Bellamy's Looking Backward, Counts essentially accepted Bellamy's utopian aims for a cooperative democratic society that used the scientific method to continually progress and develop a planned collectivist society.[35] Counts was so impressed by Bellamy's work that he included it as recommended reading for teachers in his report, A Call to the Teachers of the Nation.[36]

Counts was influenced in his thought by a reliance on the idea of Progress. Like Dewey he saw man as a planning, future-looking organism who by use of the scientific method could be the designer of his social evolution.[37] From Bellamy, Counts derived the broad outline of what future society should be and how man should direct himself toward developing a planned collectivist society.[38]

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[33]Ibid., pp. 3-4.

[34]Ibid., p. 4.

[35]Gutek, op. cit., pp. 239-240.

[36]Ibid., pp. 72-73.

[37]Ibid., p. 232.

[38]Ibid., p. 240.

Theodore Brameld [1904- ]

Brameld centered the origin of reconstructionist thought in Dewey's philosophy of Experimentalism. He contended, however, that times had changed since the formulation of the experimentalist philosophy and it was no longer completely adequate as a social or educational philosophy.[39]

When Brameld wrote Toward a Reconstructed Philosophy of Education, he pointed out what he believed to be the strong points and weak points of Experimentalism. According to Brameld Experimentalism was:

> Strong in scientific method--weak in concern for the concrete and comprehensive outcomes of this method. Strong in teaching us how to think--weak in teaching us the goals toward which to think. Strong in characterizing as well as encouraging active intelligence--weak in estimating and counteracting the forces and restrictions that block its effective operation. . . . Strong in the processes of on-going, dynamic experience--weak in agreeing upon the products of such experience. Strong in believing that the present is important and real--weak in believing that the future is equally important and real. Strong in delineating the complexities and pluralities of experience--weak in fusing these into comprehensive, appealing, purposeful design . . . .[40]

Brameld accepted the major and minor assumptions of the experimentalists that man must be the director of his own future, and that education was a force to be used by man in behalf of building a better world. But, he believed that the statement of ends to be sought was extremely important and that this was where Dewey's Experimentalism had fallen short.[41]

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[39]Theodore Brameld, Toward a Reconstructed Philosophy of Education (New York: The Dryden Press, Inc., 1956), p. vi.

[40]Ibid., pp. 7-8.

[41]Ibid., p. 3.

In an effort to correct what he believed to be the shortcomings of Experimentalism, Brameld turned to utopian literature. He tried to formulate definite social ends that man should seek to attain. He contended that the philosophy of Reconstructionism was viable only if it stated new and often audacious possibilities for the betterment of the human condition.[42]

In looking toward utopian literature Brameld isolated two works that he believed supplied at least the embryo of the thoughts needed to elevate man, and to supply worthy ends toward which man should strive. These two works were Francis Bacon's New Atlantis and Edward Bellamy's Looking Backward.[43]

In relation to New Atlantis Brameld wrote:

> Bacon placed the scientist at the center of the ideal society described in his New Atlantis. Through the abolition of ignorance and superstition, through the development of education and knowledge, Bacon believed, the problems of the world could finally be solved. Although he lived more than three hundred years ago, some of his proposals, such as that for the establishment of endowed centers for experimentation, are much more workable today than when they were made. Bacon seems to have been prophetic of the industrial, liberal, and scientific age just beginning to dawn in his own time.[44]

It was to Bellamy's work more than Bacon's that Brameld turned for inspiration. As he said in the preface to The Teacher as World Citizen:

> And so I attempt here to update the significance and relevance of magnetic, utopian ends as counterbalance to short-sighted, "realistic" means. I shall ask you to share these ends or purposes with me, inspired as I am again by the best known of all utopian writers in American history--

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[42]Ibid., pp. 23-

[43]Ibid., pp. 26-32.

[44]Ibid., p. 26.

> Edward Bellamy. In building upon his major work, I shall try to do so with warm affinity for his convictions. . . . [45]

The convictions that Brameld found in Bellamy's Looking Backward were the utopian concepts of a rationally planned, scientific, democratic, and collectivist society. Unlike Dewey and other experimentalist thinkers Brameld saw no reason to try to build a case for the acceptance of the idea of Progress; defined as man planning his own social evolution. He accepted this notion as a given way of American thought and concentrated upon defining the ends toward which man should strive.[46]

Brameld gave Counts credit for initiating the reconstructionist movement with the polemic entitled Dare the School Build a New Social Order? He further gave Counts credit for having turned the minds of some educators to thinking about the possibility of using education to produce a socially organized democracy. He felt, however, that Counts had not gone far enough in his utopian views and really had remained a progressive. It was Brameld's opinion that the Frontier Thinkers like Counts and Rugg had started something new but had not carried their thoughts through to their logical utopian conclusions.[47]

## SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY

### Harold Rugg and George Counts

Rugg wrote in 1955 that man stood at a cross-road concerning the thought of progress. Western man during the past six decades

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[45]Theodore Brameld, The Teacher as World Citizen (The Kappa Delta Pi Lecture Series, New Orleans, Louisiana, 1974), p. x.

[46]Ibid., p. ix.

[47]Brameld, Toward a Reconstructed Philosophy of Education, op. cit., pp. 159-160.

learned to harness great sources of power and wrought great technological changes upon the face of society. This scientific or technological revolution, however, caused a great problem of social control or question of ends toward which all this progress was to be directed. Rugg argued that the future of Western society depended upon the ends man sought; he could either bring forth an age of plenty or a condition of wholesale catastrophe.[48]

He believed that man's value systems had not changed fast enough to keep pace with technological change and that a cultural lag had developed. Most people retained social ideas and value systems that were conducive to an age already passed. People retained the mythology of individualism and laissez-faire in an era that required cooperation and planning.[49]

Essentially Counts agreed with Rugg; he too saw man at the cross-roads where great technological advance created a civilization where the promise of security and plenty was at the fingertips of all. But where also, the greatest savagery and barbarism was a great possibility.[50]

Counts, like Rugg, also believed that modern technological advances had outrun man's social and value system development. According to him man was entering the atomic age with minds formed largely in the day of the hoe, the horse, the spinning wheel, and the sailing ship.[51] What was needed was a change in the value systems of

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[48]Rugg, op. cit., p. 6.

[49]Ibid., p. 192.

[50]George S. Counts, Education and American Civilization (New York: Columbia University Press, 1952), p. 184.

[51]Ibid., p. 185.

individualism and laissez-faire to cooperation and planning.[52]

In defense of his position, that collective behavior was the essence of thought in an industrialized society, Counts said:

> Only in a diminishing sector of the economy chiefly in agriculture and small business, does the historic value of individualism prevail. And even here it has been notably modified. Men and women join together in organizations of most diverse character to advance their interests or achieve their purposes. Investors join together in corporations . . . businessmen join together in associations . . . industrial workers join together in unions . . . , farmers join together in granges . . . , and consumers join together in cooperatives. . . .[53]

Unfortunately, according to Counts, man, though confronted with this evidence of cooperation and collectivism in an industrialized society, continued to extol the virtues of economic individualism and to denounce collective practices and social planning.[54] Counts contended that man must put this type of thought behind him and put his energies into a central planning agency to coordinate the actions of these various groups to bring about the common welfare.[55]

The reconstructionists viewed the system of education as a powerful force in society. It was their belief that the school could and should be used as a vehicle to bring about the needed social change from the old individualistic, laissez-faire and capitalistic society to the new cooperative, collectivist society that was needed in the emerging industrial and atomic age. They believed that as the conditions of the times changed so the value systems of society must also change. They advocated an experimentalist scientific approach to the structuring of value systems and argued that the school played

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[52]Ibid., p. 192.

[53]Ibid.

[54]Ibid., p. 193.

[55]Ibid.

a vital role in the reconstruction of value systems.[56]

Theodore Brameld

Brameld's social philosophy was based on the idea of Progress. He wrote that man was living in a new age that required new ways of thought in order for man to democratically plan and direct future social evolution toward amelioration of the human condition.[57]

The first thing that man had to do in order to establish this social condition was to reconstruct the meaning of the relationship between science and philosophy. According to Brameld man traditionally polarized the concepts of science and philosophy. To some men science was the only means to truth, these men Brameld called factualists; to others philosophy was the only way to truth, these men Brameld called absolutists. The time was at hand, however, when man must use both science and philosophy to formulate answers to social problems.[58]

To Brameld the function of the scientist in modern society was to carry on experimentation and to report his findings to society. The function of philosophers then became threefold: (1) to examine the presuppositions of science, (2) to synthesize the meaning of scientific finds from various disciplines and generalize the results, and (3) to formulate ends to which scientific finds should be used.[59]

Brameld further asserted that education was a prime moving force in society. The role of the educator was to take the results

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[56]Gutek, The Educational Theory of George S. Counts, op. cit., pp. 3-5.

[57]Theodore Brameld, Education for the Emerging Age (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1965), p. 80.

[58]Ibid., pp. 71-72.

[59]Ibid., pp. 74-75.

formulated by the scientific-philosophic synthesis, and from these results he was to formulate the purposes and objectives of public education.[60]

According to Brameld the science of Anthropology isolated a number of purposes and objectives that were common to all people. It was universal that:

> They want security. They want to work at something that gives them satisfaction. They want to be appreciated and loved. They want to feel that they belong to an enterprise larger than themselves to which they can give their loyalty. They want to participate in determining the conditions by which they live.[61]

Philosophers synthesized these specific findings into a generalization called "social-self-realization," a term that symbolized the desire of most men for the richest possible fulfillment of themselves both personally and in their relations with other men through groups and institutions.[62] It was this concept that educators were to use in order to formulate objectives and purposes in their role as social reconstructionists. To quote Brameld:

> Social-self-realization . . . becomes then a powerful symbol by which to consider the adequacy or inadequacy of current educational objectives. And one reason it is so powerful is that it is by no means the mere speculative offspring of some philosopher's imagination. It is, rather, a kind of shorthand symbol of the findings of a great number of disciplines from which philosophers themselves must borrow if they are to be effective.[63]

The establishment of a social democracy was the end toward which the synthesis of science, philosophy, and education was to be directed. It was in a social democracy that the concept of social-

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[60]Ibid., p. 90.

[61]Ibid., p. 93.

[62]Ibid.

[63]Ibid.

self-realization could be actualized and used as a force to facilitate progress and social amelioration. Any other theory of state, such as that of laissez-faire and competition, in our modern industrialized interdependent world would spell disaster for Western society.[64]

## SOCIAL GOALS

### Harold Rugg

Rugg drew his definition of social goals from the statement of a basic assumption: "In any society that is at all complicated, the various parts, processes, institutions, and people must be brought into some sort of effective working organization."[65] His major assumption was followed by a minor assumption related to what he believed to be a problem of the modern industrialized state. His minor assumption was that industrialization caused a social dilemma for it created: ". . . a freer and more individualistic world which also required greater cooperation."[66]

According to Rugg the two old answers to these problems, free-enterprise or laissez-faire, and the older concept of a democratic government no longer functioned to solve these problems. The free-enterprise system had broken down as was seen in the Great Depression, and laissez-faire government had become too complex and overrun with interest groups to function properly as a coordinating factor for the general welfare.[67]

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[64]Ibid., pp. 84-86.

[65]Rugg and Withers, Social Foundations of Education, op. cit., p. 50.

[66]Ibid., pp. 50-51.

[67]Ibid., p. 51.

To Rugg the answer to the problem was increasing social governmental control. As he said:

> These problems must be met increasingly by governmental controls, since modern social control is largely through government. This conclusion is based upon the following proposition. . . . In a complex, industrialized society, neither the market, nor personal morality, nor completely democratic government can exert sufficient social control over our complicated social-economic world.[68]

Rugg argued that the answer to progress was in the essence of the idea of Progress, that being that man must exercise planning and give conscious direction to social and economic growth.[69] The solution to this problem was to institute the precepts of the social and economic theory of John Maynard Keynes. This theory, as Rugg saw it, was characterized by the following beliefs: (1) security could be obtained with freedom, (2) laissez-faire was not the solution to the problem of security, (3) government control was needed to make capitalism function effectively, (4) the government was responsible for economic planning, and (5) the government was responsible for the maintenance of economic security.[70]

Rugg recognized that convincing the people to accept a planned, cooperative, scientifically directed, collectivist society was a stumbling block to the institution of his social goals.[71] He was convinced however that a school curriculum, based on his social philosophy and social goals would effect the needed psychological changes in order for the concept of planned social progress to become the American way of life.[72]

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[68]Ibid., p. 53. [69]Ibid., p. 64.

[70]Ibid., p. 73. [71]Ibid., p. 53. [72]Ibid., pp. 4-5.

George Counts

Counts maintained that men should join in a cooperative, planned, scientifically directed social system in order to progress toward the building of the Great Society.[73] There were certain specific goals, however, that had to be attained first before the major goal of the Great Society could be achieved. These specific goals were: (1) the furthering of good health, (2) the promotion of family life, (3) the humanization of economic life, (4) the advancement of civic life, (5) the enrichment of recreational life, and (6) the fostering of religious life.[74]

According to Counts when these specific goals were attained man would be the possessor of the great dream of man; he would have attained the utopian golden age of civilization based on plenty, enlightenment, beauty and justice.[75] Counts like Rugg was convinced that the educational system was to be used as a vehicle for social change. He contended that if the school curriculum was designed around the concepts of his social goals these goals would be instilled into the forthcoming generation; the Great Society, based on the ideals of democracy, cooperation, science, and the idea of Progress, would be formed.[76]

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[73]Counts and Chapman, Principles of Education, op. cit., p. 210.

[74]Ibid., p. xviii.

[75]Counts, Education and American Civilization, op. cit., p. 212.

[76]Counts and Chapman, Principles of Education, op. cit., pp. 200-362.

## Theodore Brameld

Brameld's social philosophy was designed to promote or facilitate certain definite social goals. The social goals that a reconstructed social philosophy was to produce were: (1) an adequate theory of human nature, (2) an adequate theory of social forces, (3) an adequate theory of the state, (4) an adequate theory of government, and (5) an adequate theory of normative commitment.[77]

## Theory of Human Nature

Brameld defined science as experimental psychology. This indicated that the psychological nature of man was best explained by the naturalistic-organismic concept that:

> . . . people of every race, nationality, religion, or social status are sufficiently alike in their basic structures, energies, potential abilities, to reach a vastly higher level of competence, self-reliance, and achievement than social opportunity has thus far typically offered.[78]

According to Brameld, this scientific find led social philosophers to conclude that the desire for self-government was a basic drive of man.[79] He believed that this basic scientific discovery with its attendant philosophical implications meant that the scientific-philosophic-educational complex should continue to refine the concept of the nature of man and to construct a social system in which the nature of man could reach its democratic potential. Thus one of the supreme goals of the reconstructionists was to develop democratic institutions in every phase of social interaction.[80]

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[77]Brameld, Education for the Emerging Age, op. cit., pp. 82-83.

[78]Ibid., p. 83.

[79]Ibid.

[80]Ibid.

Theory of Social Forces

A reconstructed theory of the nature of man required the definition, isolation, and destruction of: (1) stubborn, ethnocentric allegiances; (2) intergroup conflicts that emanated from racial, national, or religious clusterings; (3) the issue of the struggle between economic classes; and (4) any devious exertions of the forces that shaped public opinion. Brameld believed that philosopher-scientists should seek to answer the persistent question of how the tremendous and constructive power of the common people could be released and directed toward the building of a world-wide democratic culture.[81]

Theory of the State

In relation to the reconstruction of a theory of state Brameld stated two definite goals. The first of these was the elimination of national sovereignty and the building of a one-world government. The second was to build a positive welfare state of public service that eliminated laissez-faire and initiated programs in behalf of the popular well-being.[82]

Theory of Government

Brameld argued that the social goal of reconstructionists in relation to a theory of government, was to produce an unqualifiedly democratic government. By this he meant a government based on the philosophy of rational empiricism, where majority rule prevailed but the rights of minority opinion were respected and could with time

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[81]Ibid., p. 84.

[82]Ibid., p. 85.

actually become the majority opinion. On the other hand, however, he retained the concept that the leaders should act as guides who helped the people to perceive more exactly their own best interests in relation to changed social conditions.[83]

Theory of Normative Commitment

Brameld believed that the theory of normative commitment, defined as people determining their own goals, had to be instilled in people's minds. In other words people must believe in the idea of Progress; that mankind and only mankind was the creator of its own future. This commitment included the idea that society, defined as all of the people, should decide the ends toward which human creations were to be used, and that a cooperative, scientific minded, collectivist society was the only means by which this new world could be created.[84]

Brameld and Utopianism as a Social Goal

In his novel The Teacher as World Citizen, Brameld used Bellamy's novel Looking Backward as a template from which he presented his view of what future society, specifically December 26, 2000, would be like if his social philosophy and goals were instituted.[85] Brameld's novel was based on the idea that man must set definite utopian goals in his quest to produce a better world. He described two major goals that he believed man should strive to achieve. These major goals were: (1) the establishment of a World Community of Nations, and (2) the establishment of a Democratic Ecosystem.[86]

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[83]Ibid., pp. 86-87.

[84]Ibid., p. 88.

[85]Brameld, The Teacher as World Citizen, op. cit., p. 3.

[86]Ibid., pp. 8-39.

In Brameld's novel the World Community of Nations had been established because people perceived that:

> . . . the world was in danger of collapse from its own disorganized, planless, shortsighted "progress" toward more and more of the same kinds of chaos, disorder, and bloodshed. . . . substantial numbers of us at last came to realize that only profoundly radical alternatives in human arrangements could possibly save our species from its own failures, stupidities, and quite probably its own destruction.[87]

The World Community of Nations was a political arrangement where each nation had given up the nineteenth century concept of freedom, and political power was vested in one international order. All people were considered to be world citizens and were equal regardless of sex or race. The World Community of Nations was dedicated to the ideal of continued progress toward complete genetic and cultural assimilation.[88]

The concept of a Democratic Ecosystem was based on public and social rather than private and individual control of natural resources and the facilities of production.[89] This system, which Brameld referred to as humanistic socialism, was a blend of Marxist economic theory and ecological conservation on a world scale. It was aimed at world population control and the planned use of natural resources for the benefit of all mankind. The entire system was based on the idea of a cooperative system of economics where all people worked together for the common good.[90]

Brameld contended that when the World Community of Nations and the Democratic Ecosystem were achieved the renewal of humanity would have commenced. Then a cooperative collectivist world society dedicated

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[87]Ibid., p. 4.

[88]Ibid., p. 9.

[89]Ibid., p. 13.

[90]Ibid., pp. 25-32.

to the general and continued amelioration of the human condition would be a political reality.[91] He argued that this was the type of world that mankind should strive to create. It was the only one that would not lead man down the road to extinction. An education with a curriculum based on the concept that man could be the creator of his own future was to be a major instrument to create that world.[92]

## CURRICULUM THEORY

### George Counts

Counts' curriculum theory was based on the idea that the school could be used as a vehicle for social change. He believed, however, that this would not happen until teachers rejected the age-old idea of objectivity and became prophets of a new age.[93] What was called for was for educators to unite in a faith the idea of Progress and education, for the promotion of the general social welfare. Such a union, however, must have as a foundation a set of definite objectives if it was to have orientation, direction, and purpose.[94]

To Counts the set of objectives needed to form the foundation of the curriculum were the same objectives he defined as social goals: (1) the furthering of good health, (2) the promotion of family life, (3) the humanization of economic life, (4) the advancement of civic life, (5) the enrichment of recreational life, and (6) the fostering

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[91]Ibid., pp. 40-42.

[92]Brameld, Education for the Emerging Age, op. cit., pp. 83-90.

[93]George S. Counts, Dare the School Build a New Social Order? (New York: The John Day Company, Inc., 1932), p. 4.

[94]Ibid., pp. 5-6.

of religious life.[95] Counts argued that the future of society depended upon how educators used these six basic social goals as the foundation to curriculum development. He wrote:

> One is forced to believe that as these activities are more intelligently conducted, mankind progresses; as they are undertaken without adequate training, mankind falters; as they are entered upon through an ill-conceived education, mankind regresses.[96]

To Counts the function of education was to produce the good society. Such a society was not a gift of nature, it was not going to just happen, it must be fashioned and built by the hand and brain of man.[97]

The Elementary School

The elementary school curriculum advocated by Counts was centered around the six basic activities of life. He believed that any other criteria would be unenlightened, inhumane, unloved, and destructive to democratic ideals.[98] In relation to the elementary school curriculum Counts said:

> The central task of the elementary school is to insure the acquisition of those fundamental skills, knowledge, appreciations, dispositions, and powers which all members of the group must possess . . . if they are to live together in a relation of mutual benefit and enjoy to the maximum the fruits of collective enterprise. This institution should provide that common culture through which the group is integrated and given common direction.[99]

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[95]Counts and Chapman, Principles of Education, op. cit., p. 380.

[96]Ibid., p. 379.

[97]Counts, Dare the School Build a New Social Order? op. cit., p. 15.

[98]Counts and Chapman, Principles of Education, op. cit., p. 408.

[99]Ibid., p. 412.

According to Counts there were three methods to be employed at the elementary level that would bring about the desired purpose. These three methods were: (1) direct experiences, (2) vicarious experiences in the race inheritance, and (3) activities necessary for imparting the tools of knowledge upon which the successful pursuit of the first and second groups of activities were intimately dependent.[100]

Counts derived his educational concept of direct concrete experiences from Dewey's idea that since the development of industrialized society children were isolated from participating directly in fundamental experiences with the use of the tools of progress. Counts argued that the project method of direct experience in the use of these tools had to be provided on the elementary level. He wrote:

> . . . Dewey and others have suggested, children be given the opportunity of working with paper, cardboard, wood, leather, cloth, yarns, clay, sand, and metal; they should learn how to use the simpler tools, such as knife, needle, thread, fork, pan, stove, broom, hammer, saw, file, plane, and spade; they should become familiar with the processes of folding, cutting, pricking, measuring, moulding, modeling, pattern-making, heating, . . . they should participate in gardening, cooking, sewing, . . . dramatization, story-telling, and outdoor excursions; . . . All of these activities should proceed in an environment essentially social in its character.[101]

These projects were centered around the six basic activities that would produce the Great Society. Care was to be taken by the teachers that projects were not selected at random. Projects must contribute to the children's understanding of how man could improve health, develop a happy family, contribute to the progressive development of civic life, and participate in sound recreational activities.[102]

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[100]Ibid., p. 413.

[101]Ibid., pp. 416-417.

[102]Ibid., pp. 416-417.

The greatest benefit to be derived from the project method was children working in cooperative groups which provided one of the main dispositions needed to produce Counts' view of the society man had to build. As Counts said:

> It is perhaps in developing the ability to live together in groups that the elementary school provides the richest opportunities. Everywhere in the school we see groups of children. They work in groups, they play in groups. Here is an unrivaled opportunity for children to acquire those habits, dispositions, and attitudes that are necessary for adaptation to life in the Great Society.[103]

The function of vicarious experiences in the curriculum was to supplement the concrete experience component. The main purpose of this curriculum component was to introduce the child to the accumulated wisdom of the race so that when blended with those dispositions learned from direct experience it gave the child a foundation from which to work in adjusting to and developing the future social system.[104]

The vicarious experience aspect of the curriculum was developed around the areas of history, geography, science, literature, music, art, and philosophy. These subjects were not taught as separate disciplines, they were integrated and history provided the core by which this interrelatedness was achieved. These disciplines were related to concrete experience and present social conditions. The function of the teacher was to design learning events using the interrelated concept so that the overall purpose of the curriculum was expediently facilitated. The object was to show how man interacted with his environment, how he had progressed by changing his environment and how man could produce the Great Society of the future.[105]

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[103]Ibid., p. 417. [104]Ibid., p. 422. [105]Ibid., pp. 424-425.

Harold Rugg

Rugg believed that the function of a reconstructed theory of education was to facilitate the integration of society and culture. He contended that there was a cultural lag between what society had become as a result of the industrial revolution, and the thought patterns of the normal citizen.[106]

The process of education was to develop a three-fold method of instruction in order to facilitate the needed integration. These methods were: (1) to inspire students, (2) to inform students, and (3) to bring about a disciplined initiative on the part of the student.[107]

The task of inspiring students was defined as instilling in their minds a deep and abiding belief in the ability of man to build a world of peace, physical abundance, and democratic thought. The task of education in relation to informing students was to build a curriculum that included the best knowledge and most sensitive ideas of man. Thirdly, the task of education was to build a curriculum around problem solving so that students would develop the disposition of disciplined initiative defined as the ability to solve the problems of new social situations.[108]

According to Rugg the best way to solve the problem of social integration, and to bring about the needed psychological dispositions for the new age was to reconstruct the content area of the social

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[106]Rugg and Withers, Social Foundations of Education, op. cit., p. 690.

[107]Ibid.

[108]Ibid., p. 691.

studies curriculum being taught in the schools.[109] Rugg acted upon this conviction and wrote a four-volume set of social studies textbooks, published between 1930 and 1934, to be used in junior and senior high schools. The first volume, An Introduction to American Civilization, was devoted to a study of American economic life. The second volume, Changing Civilizations in the Modern World, introduced the student to life in other industrial nations. The third and fourth volumes, A History of American Civilization: Economic and Social, and A History of American Government and Culture, comprised a history of the United States interrelated with its geographic setting.[110]

These texts were designed to bring about the three stated dispositions that Rugg believed were needed to facilitate the integration of society. The use of the dramatic episode as a writing method was designed to inspire students with interesting reading on how man had overcome adversity and progressed. The books were written from the research of the most outstanding specialists in the field, and thereby ensured that the students were presented with the best knowledge of man; and the concept of problem solving: presenting the student with social problems to be solved, was liberally incorporated throughout the books.[111]

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[109]Harold Rugg, "Curriculum Making: Points of Emphasis," The Foundations of Curriculum-Making, Harold Rugg and others (Bloomington: Public School Publishing Company, 1926), p. 149.

[110]Harold Rugg, A History of American Government and Culture (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1931), p. v.

[111]Ibid., pp. v-viii.

Inspiration and the Dramatic Episode

By the skillful employment of fiction and historical fact, Rugg presented the history of the American Indian, as a variant of mankind, who had become so well integrated into his environment that all of his institutions had become conditioned by his geographic setting, and he had, in essence, produced a static non-evolving society.[112] An example of Rugg's use of fiction to make an important anthropological point about the Indian's over-adaptation to his environment was seen in the following statement:

> Among the tree trunks a moving form appeared. A half-dressed man moved noiselessly along a narrow forest path. His lithe, straight body glided swiftly. He paused for a moment in a splash of sunlight which fell upon the trail. Then he passed, hard muscles rippling smoothly beneath his copper-brown skin. In a moment he was lost to sight among the tree trunks. The quiet of the forest, scarcely disturbed by his passage, settled again. The only movement was the flight of a bird from tree to tree.[113]

By contrast Rugg presented the Mayan civilization of Central and South America as a progressive society. They, according to Rugg, were another variant of man who had used their capacities of invention to conquer nature and build a great society with a written language, a calendar, paved roads and great cities where the inhabitants had lived a good life.[114]

To instill the idea or Progress in the minds of students through the problem solving method, Rugg asked: "Do you think from the description above that the Mayas were as much the slaves of nature as

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[112]Harold Rugg, A History of American Civilization (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1930), pp. 3-20.

[113]Ibid., p. 3.

[114]Ibid., pp. 21-24.

the Iroquois Indians? the plains Indians? the California Indians? in general, the Indians of North America?"[115]

Rugg used essentially the same educational method to present the history of the early American settlers. He presented them as inspired people who eventually overcame the terrible hardships of the natural environment and carved out a living for themselves in the new world.[116]

Problem Solving and New Social Situations

Rugg used the same methods of dramatic episode and problem solving to introduce students to the problems of new social situations. He began his book, A History of American Government and Culture, with a hypothetical discussion between a teacher and his students. The setting for this discussion was a social studies club in a junior high school.[117]

By the method of hypothetical discussion, where the teacher and the students asked questions, Rugg led the reader to the following conclusions: (1) a strong government was needed in order for people to live together, (2) the government functioned for the social welfare of the people, (3) the government must be involved in educational and economic problems if social amelioration was to take place, and (4) the government and the people worked together to solve continuing social problems in order that social growth could take place in a dynamic world.[118]

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[115]Ibid., p. 23.

[116]Ibid., pp. 99-106.

[117]Rugg, A History of American Government and Culture, op. cit., p. 3.

[118]Ibid., pp. 3-8.

Toward the end of the same book Rugg employed the method of rhetorical questions to lead the reader to the following conclusions: (1) the world system of nations was becoming more interdependent; (2) the United States must take a role in international organizations; (3) nations must develop a cooperative international system to conserve and share natural resources; (4) nations, through international organizations, must limit their military might; and (5) continued international cooperation in problem solving would lead to a better world for all people.[119] At the end of the book, Rugg stated that the future of the world was in the hands of the students, that they, through their own efforts, could build a better world, and that through problem solving, education, and cooperation they could ameliorate the human social condition.[120]

Theodore Brameld

Brameld's reconstructed theory of curriculum was based on a number of functions that he thought the school had to cease to perform. According to him these functions subverted the idea of Progress, and prevented the construction of the new society he believed mankind needed in order to survive.[121]

The first of these negative functions that ought to be curtailed, was the promotion of the religious idea that the future of mankind was largely if not entirely predetermined because it was preordained by some irrevocable, deity-mandated law. The second function

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[119]Ibid., pp. 572-582. [120]Ibid., p. 595.

[121]Theodore Brameld, "Education as Self-Fulfilling Prophecy, Phi Delta Kappan, LIV (September, 1972), 8-9.

that ought to be curtailed was the undemocratic procedure of tracking students, particularly minority groups, into curricula that supposedly prepared them for occupations that fit both their abilities and their opportunities. This procedure lowered the individual's personal esteem of himself, and destroyed his view of what he could become as a person. The third educational function that ought to be curtailed was the school's continued perpetuation of the accepted cultural and economic life of society.[122] According to Brameld these ideas, that education perpetuated, ran counter to the social-self-realization concept that anthropologists isolated as a prime human need found in all types of people.[123]

Brameld argued that the school curriculum should be based upon the following objectives, that were in accord with the social-self-realization concept, and the idea of Progress: (1) that people could work together cooperatively in attacking problems and solving these problems; (2) that conflict between sexes, generations, economic classes, and races could be ameliorated; (3) that nations working together could conquer, and control the threat of human annihilation; (4) that people could rebuild economic and political establishments on a national and world level so that all peoples would benefit from the world's natural and human resources; (5) that mankind was one species and that he could be the director and controller of the future; and (6) that education could be a tool to help facilitate the reconstruction of man's society as he built for the future.[124]

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[122]Ibid. [123]Ibid., pp. 58-59.

[124]Theodore Brameld, "A Cross-Cutting Approach to the Curriculum: The Moving Wheel," Phi Delta Kappan, LI (March, 1970), 347.

The Secondary School Curriculum

Brameld saw the secondary school as the most crucial period of a person's education. He believed that this was the time in which most young men and women formed their ideas and plans in relation to the future. Consequently Brameld, when he discussed curriculum theory, limited his ideas to what he believed to be the crucial years.[125]

He did not, however, define the period of secondary education in the usual way. To him the secondary school should actually be composed of what was considered to be the last two years of present secondary education and the first two years of college. Therefore, when Brameld spoke of secondary education, he actually considered the age level of between seventeen years and twenty years of age. In relation to this he believed that mandatory education should extend until the twentieth year of a person's life.[126]

The First Year of Secondary Education

The objectives for the first year of secondary education were: (1) to orient the student and build in him a sense of the importance of the entire secondary program, and (2) to examine the need for, and character of goals associated with the economic-political reconstruction of society.[127] Brameld placed economic-political reconstruction in the first year of study because he thought that all other areas of social and cultural reconstruction were predicated upon the economic-political base.[128]

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[125]Theodore Brameld, Toward a Reconstructed Philosophy of Education, op. cit., p. 212.

[126]Ibid. [127]Ibid., p. 218. [128]Ibid.

The first-year curriculum began in the most immediate and familiar experiences of the student; these were himself, his family, and his local community. The study started when the teacher led the students to identify the existence of real, immediate, and meaningful problems. In relation to this, Brameld wrote:

> We tap [the student's] well springs of interest by detecting his uncertainties, tensions, instabilities, and confusions as they are related to those of his family and to . . . , where he lives. We then relate these difficulties to whatever certainties, stabilities, and clarities constitute, by contrast, the positive aims of [the student], his family, and [his local community].[129]

By this method, according to Brameld, the students made a concerted effort to estimate how secure or insecure the local community was; how much agreement or disagreement there was about its own problems, practices, and plans. During the process the teacher acted as a guide to make sure that the students penetrated deeply enough to discover the actual, rather than the merely ideological, picture of the community.[130]

The objective, after this initial study, was to expand the student's view so that he perceived the local communities' interdependence upon other political and economic structures. In relation to this objective of the curriculum Brameld stated:

> The student's understanding increases as the status of the local community is seen to be dependent upon the status of other communities and of the state, region, nation, and world. The aim is to widen the analysis, both geographically and historically; to see, for example, how the prosperity or poverty of the local community depends upon the state of the economy of the entire nation and indeed the world, and how this dependence emerges directly from the forces of contraction and expansion in recent history. There is, accordingly, a need to

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[129]Ibid., p. 219.

[130]Ibid.

> study the past in order to foster concern for both present and future--indeed, history is indispensable. . . .[131]

The methods employed to facilitate these objectives were: (1) first-hand observation by community visitation, (2) discussion groups with members of the community, (3) the study of books, and (4) the study of history used as a tool to identify the roots of problems. By this method, and the facilitation of these objectives, it was hoped that the students would begin to feel the impact of the crisis-culture on themselves and their community. The students were to recognize the achievements of the old order, but they were to weigh these achievements against such realities as depression, insecurity, war, divisive group allegiances, and therefore begin to sense the power of the irrational that underlay those realities.[132]

After a period of time related to the study of the current situation in the economic-political sphere, the students moved on to a consideration of what would be a better economic-political order. Brameld referred to this part of the curriculum as the quest for the normative, and believed that by this method education moved from the ontological sphere to the axiological sphere.[133]

The quest for the normative began in the most practical considerations; the student's private life, and the local community. In essence the students sought to identify what changes had to be made in social arrangements so that their lives and the environment of the local community could be made better. The quest for the

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[131]Ibid.

[132]Ibid., pp. 219-220.

[133]Ibid., p. 220.

normative was to spiral out from the local to the broader concepts of state, region, nation, and world.[134]

The quest for the future was to be rooted in history. It was from the historical perspective that students saw the mistakes of the past and learned from history the trends that drove society into the perpetuation of more of the same. From this perspective, students developed the idea that they had to take an active role in changing historical trends, setting new goals, and directing their own future toward a better world.[135]

The role of the reconstructionist teacher was that of guide. The teacher led the students from the ontological to the axiological and instilled in the students the concept of the idea of Progress, which led to definite ends. The ends which the teacher led the students to accept were: (1) cooperation, rather than competition in economic production; (2) the dissolving of state boundaries in favor of regional ones; (3) the organization of enforceable world government, and (4) the establishment of a world citizenship.[136]

During the first year students could also participate in vocational education. They could elect to study business practices, economics, tax computations, or automechanics. These specific vocational practices were related back to the larger question of how that occupation depended upon the strength of the whole economy and a cooperative social structure.[137]

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[134]Ibid., pp. 220-223. [135]Ibid., pp. 225-226.

[136]Brameld, Toward a Reconstructed Philosophy of Education, p. 224.

[137]Ibid., p. 228.

Year Two of the Secondary School

The objective for the second year of study was the main problems, methods, needs, and goals of science and art as they related to the overall objective of the curriculum, that being the building of a better world.[138] The students began the year's study by considering the meaning of science. Through this process they examined the effect of science upon their lives and the structure of the local community. The students were to view science as a methodology rather than a body of knowledge, and were to investigate the relationship between science and values.[139]

Science was viewed as a method to solve problems and as an instrument used in the interest of the public welfare. The students considered the question of how the knowledge of science could be used to improve the general well-being of the human race. One of the major questions students were to deal with was: "Why is society often so slow to make use of the discoveries of science in furthering its own welfare?"[140]

According to Brameld students would come to learn the answer to this question through the study of history:

> . . . showing how profit-making interests often take precedence over public interests, how organized medicine has blocked national health services, and how some thousands of patents gather dust on the shelves of corporations because their release would lower the price or reduce sale of this or that commodity.[141]

Through this method of study students were led back to the core objective of the curriculum, which was the development of new value systems to produce a better, more cooperative world, where

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[139]Ibid., pp. 229-230. [140]Ibid., p. 231. [141]Ibid.

vested interests could not be used to block the scientific amelioration of the human condition.[142]

Art, like science, was taught from the point of view of how it could be used to develop a better world. In Brameld's curriculum the concept of art had a very broad definition. To him, the artist was anyone who worked imaginatively and creatively whether he was a carpenter or a composer. It was this definition of art, that when instilled in the minds of students, would lead to the concept that art must permeate all aspects of life if it was to be used to build a better world.[143]

The students during the second year of study could elect to study specialized areas of science like chemistry, physiology, ecology, or anthropology. In the arts they could elect drama, literature, or painting. But whatever they elected the subject was always taught from the position of the prime objective: the use of the subject for the amelioration of the human condition.[144]

The Third Year

The third year of study was centered around the concepts of education and human relations. The students studied the meaning and purpose of education in society. In essence, according to Brameld, the students were led to the conclusion that the purpose of the educational system of any society was to facilitate the concept of social-self-realization. Education was to be supported by funds from the

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[142]Ibid.

[143]Ibid., p. 233.

[144]Ibid., pp. 229-235.

central government, and was to be used as an agency for the continued amelioration of social problems.[145]

In the area of human relations, which was to occupy about two-thirds of the school year, students studied questions related to: (1) personal relations, (2) relations between the sexes, (3) relations between age groups, (4) relations between races, and (5) relations between nationalities. From the study of history the students were led to the conclusion that divisions, or concepts of superiority between groups led to conflict, and that these conflicts were on the whole destructive. The students were to develop the idea that equality of all people was basic to a reconstructed society. Again, as in every other part of this curriculum theory, the concept of amelioration of society was the core objective.[146]

The Fourth Year

The fourth year of study was devoted to a synthesis of all that was covered in the first three years, so that students developed a holistic view of the characteristics and ends of a reconstructed society. A good deal of time was devoted to a study of the means that people could employ in order to bring about the reconstructed society.[147]

Brameld proposed his curriculum theory as a broad model. He hoped to indicate to educators the general plan of how to construct a curriculum around what he believed to be the two most important objectives of education: (1) the social-self-realization concept, and (2) the development of the concept that people could be the molders of

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[145]Ibid., pp. 236-237.

[146]Ibid., pp. 238-244.

[147]Ibid., pp. 244-247.

their own future. He believed that if man was to survive the present age of crisis, only an educational curriculum similar to the one he proposed would prepare people to build the needed reconstructed world.[148]

## SUMMARY

The philosophic thought of the reconstructionists was deeply rooted in the idea of Progress. Harold Rugg viewed the entire trend of Western thought as directed toward the development of the idea of Progress. Both he and Counts cited the Darwinian, Wardian, Deweyan line of thought, that presented man as the director of his own social evolution, as the foundation of their philosophy. Brameld and Counts further looked to utopian literature, particularly that of Edward Bellamy, as the inspiration from which they derived their social goals (Figure 6).

The social philosophy of Rugg and Counts was based on the idea that society, due to the industrial revolution, had changed from an agrarian oriented social system to a technologically oriented society. They were convinced that man had to change his social values from an emphasis upon individualism and laissez-faire to that of cooperation and collectivism in order to survive. The core idea in their social philosophy was the idea of Progress.

They contended that man, and only man, could choose the goals toward which society should move. Man could choose to reconstruct his values and this would lead to continued progress, or he could choose to hold on to his old values and this would lead to catastrophy (Figure 7).

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[148]Brameld, Toward a Reconstructed Philosophy of Education, pp. 259-260.

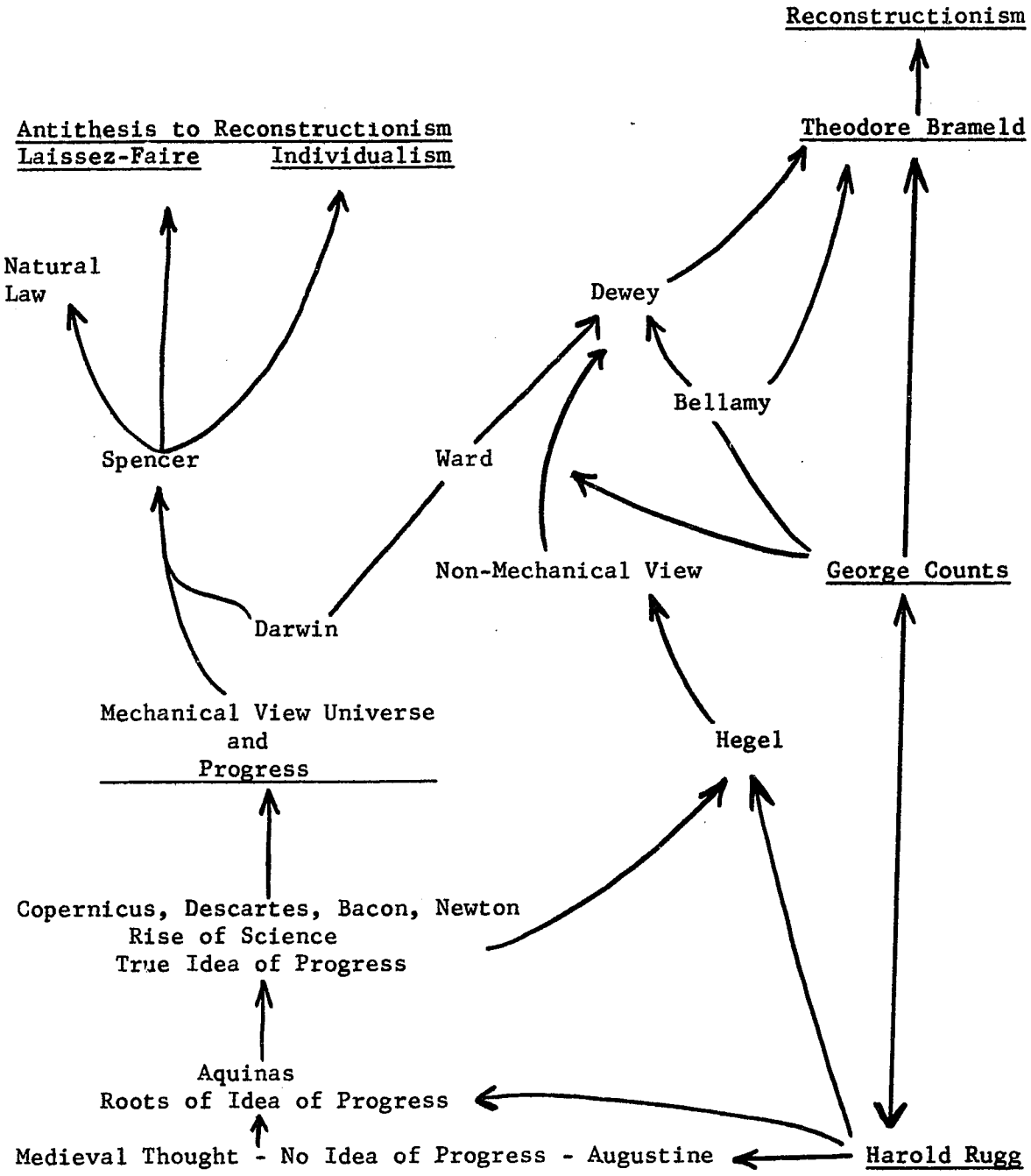


Figure 6

The Idea of Progress in Reconstructionist Thought

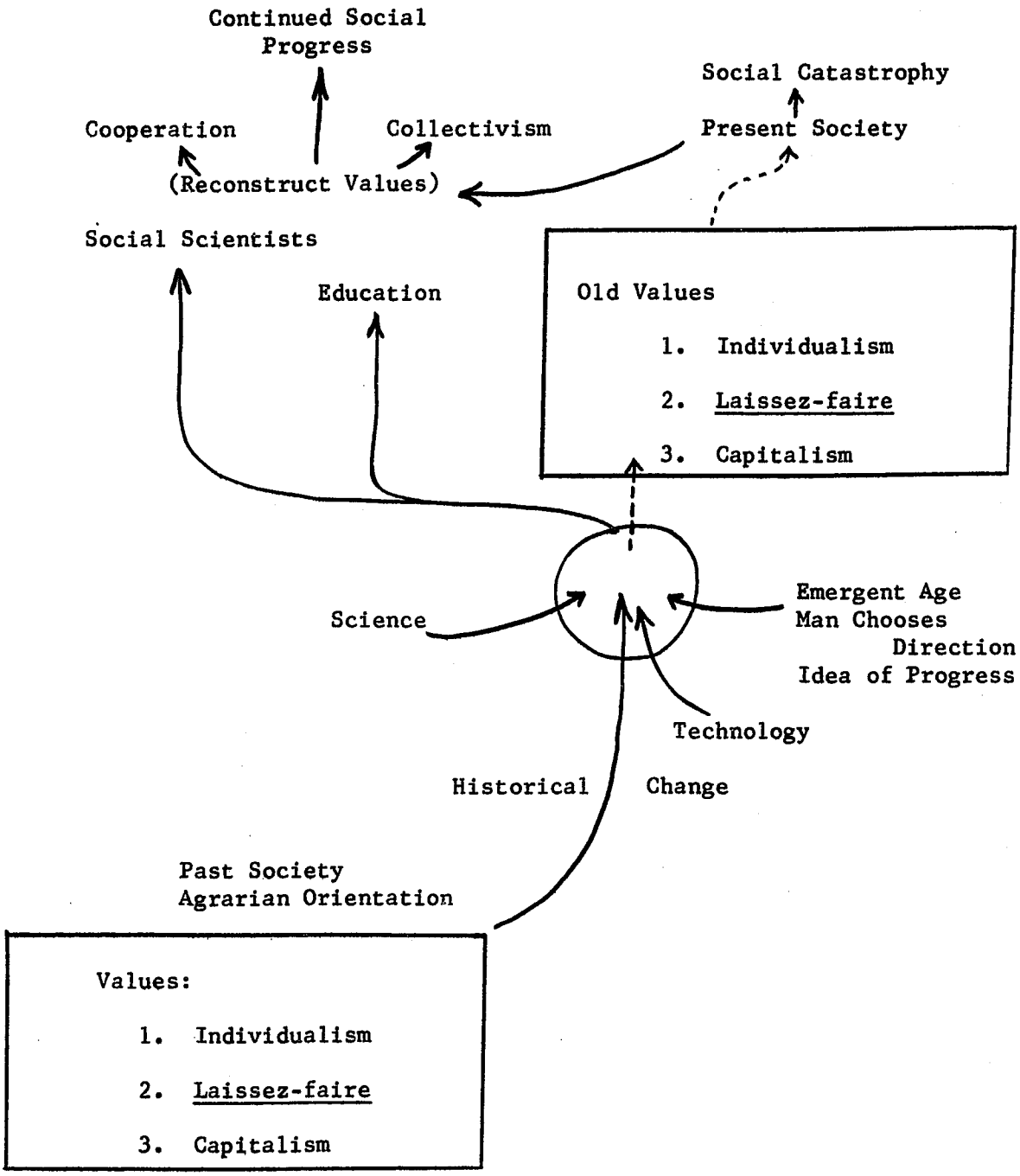


Figure 7

The Social Philosophy of George Counts and Harold Rugg

Brameld's social philosophy was also based on the idea of Progress. He, too, pictured man as the director of his own fate. Man could choose to retain his old views of the meaning of philosophy, science, and education and he could choose to retain his old value systems of laissez-faire and competition. But this choice, in the light of contemporary social crisis, could only lead to chaos. Brameld opted for man to choose the road of progress. He contended that man must reconstruct his ideas related to the use of philosophy, science, and education. He believed that a social democracy based on cooperation and collectivism led to continued social amelioration (Figure 8).

The reconstructionists were strong advocates of man directing himself toward definite social goals. Rugg believed that a strong central government based on the theory of controlled economics was the only sane end toward which man could direct society. Counts believed that man must direct himself toward building and improving the six great activities of life: (1) the furthering of good health, (2) the promotion of family life, (3) the humanization of economic life, (4) the advancement of civic life, (5) the enrichment of recreational life, and (6) the fostering of religious life. He contended that the facilitation of these ends would bring about the Great Society.

Brameld, like Rugg and Counts, advocated strong social goals. He believed that man had to reconstruct his views on human nature, social forces, theory of government, and his general value systems. He believed that man should use the concept of social-self-realization to build a truly democratic world based on a World Community of Nations and a Democratic Ecosystem.

The reconstructionists used their social philosophies and social goals as the foundation to their curriculum theories. They

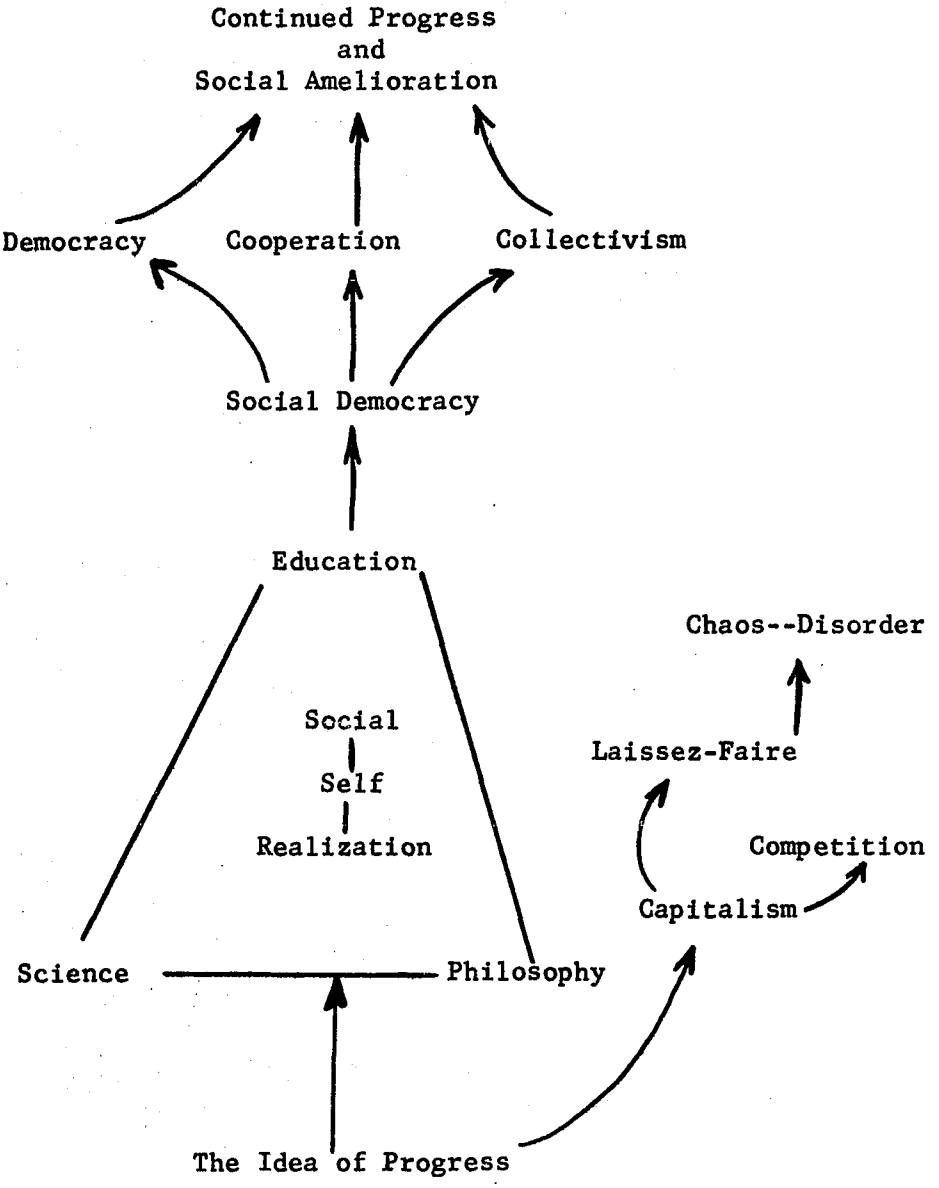


Figure 8

The Social Philosophy of Theodore Brameld

were all strong advocates of using the school as a vehicle to bring about social change.

Rugg believed that if students were given a better foundation in social studies the cultural gap between actual societal needs and value systems would be closed. He wrote a series of social studies texts that advocated the institution of a strong central government in order to solve social problems. The core idea in the books was the idea of Progress, as Rugg always pictured man as the facilitator of his own social evolution.

Counts believed that the only basis to curriculum in the nation's schools was his six great life activities. He advocated the institution of curricula based on these activities blended with the ideas of Progress and social amelioration. He believed that when this type of curricula became the foundation to the nation's educational systems future generations would be well on their way to building the Great Society.

Brameld also based his curriculum theory on his social goals. He believed that the foundations of the school's curriculum had to be the idea of Progress and the concept of social-self-realization. Brameld concentrated his efforts in curriculum theory on the secondary school. He proposed a four-year curriculum that was aimed at teaching the students to reconstruct society through cooperation, democracy, and development of an egalitarian attitude. The curriculum was designed to instill in the mind of the student that the only proper end of education was social service directed toward the amelioration of the human condition actualized in a World Community of Nations, and a Democratic Ecosystem (Figure 9).

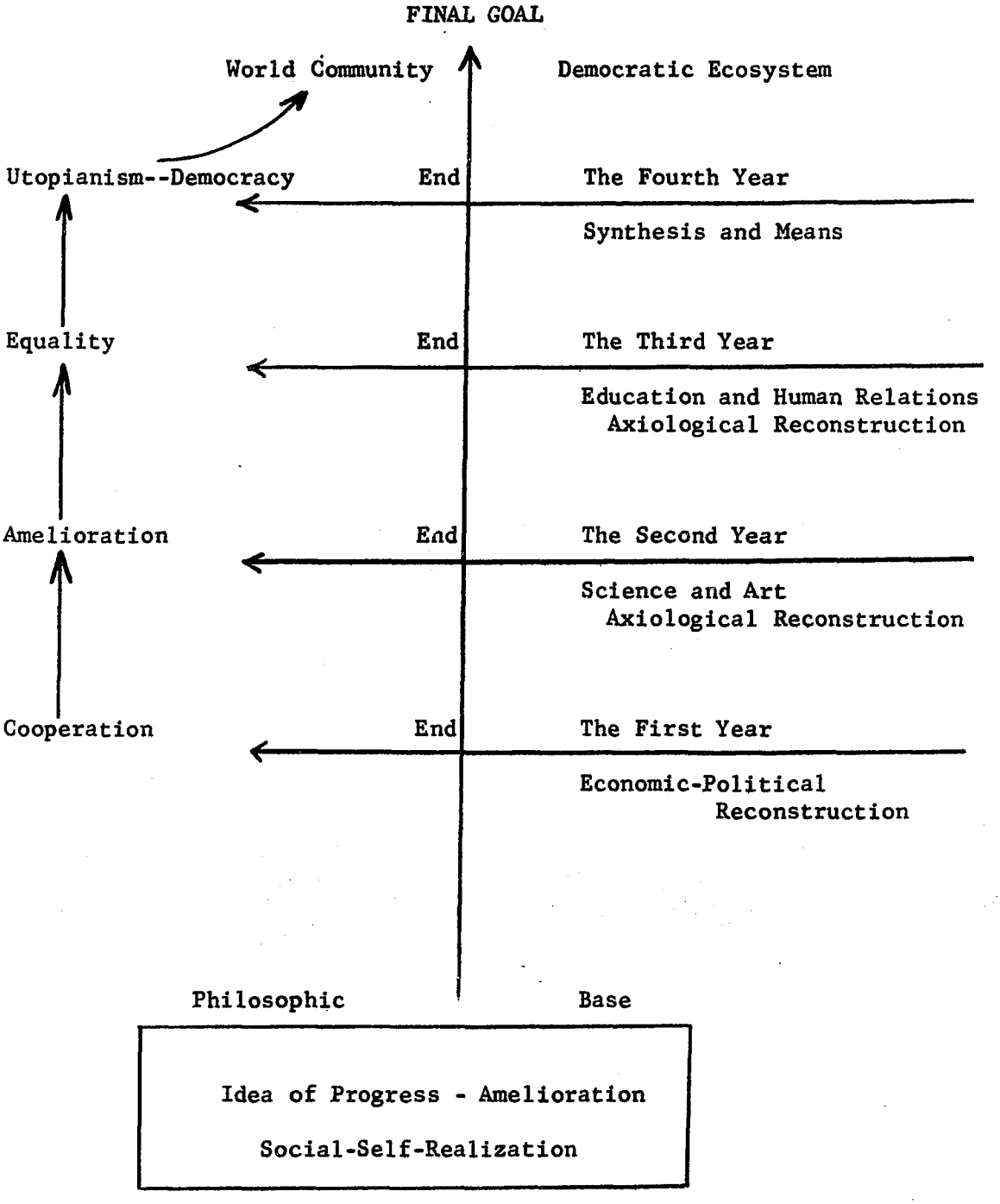


Figure 9

The Curriculum Theory of Theodore Brameld

Chapter 6

# ESSENTIALISM

## INTRODUCTION

The formal origins of the essentialist theory of education in American society can be traced to the establishment of the Essentialist Committee for the Advancement of American Education founded by William C. Bagley, Michael Demiashkevich and others in 1938.[1] It was from this meeting that Bagley drew his principles for the essentialist position on education that he later formalized in a document called "An Essentialist's Platform for the Advancement of American Education," published in April of 1938.[2]

The essentialist concept of the ultimate aim of education had its roots in seventeenth century realism; whose leaders thought education was a means to fit man to perform justly, skillfully and magnanimously all of the offices of life. This theory of education was based on the idea of preparing the pupil to adjust to the actual demands of the real external world.[3]

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[1]George F. Kneller (ed.), Foundations of Education (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1971), p. 243.

[2]James A. Johnson and others (eds.), Foundations of American Education (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1969), p. 358.

[3]Elmer H. Wilds and Kenneth V. Lottich, The Foundations of Modern Education (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1970), p. 507.

Bagley, Demiashkevich, and the other adherents to the essentialist position were looked upon as traditionalists and reactionaries who tried to maintain the status quo in relation to the curricular elements of American education. They were portrayed as being antagonistic to Dewey's theory of education and as opponents of the social reconstructionist theory of education as it was advanced by Counts and Rugg.[4] Bagley, the leader of the essentialist movement, resented the label of traditionalist or reactionary and preferred to be called an educational stalwart.[5] He maintained that his attacks on American education were not directed at Dewey, whom he recognized as an authority in educational theory and as one who had contributed greatly to the progress of American education. Bagley's protest was aimed at the more outlandish practices of progressive education such as non-sequential presentations of subject matter and over-emphasis upon child-centered education.[6]

In the "An Essentialist Platform for the Advancement of American Education," Bagley quoted liberally from the educational works of Dewey related to learning and sequential presentation of material.[7] Dewey himself made the same criticism of progressive education as did

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[4]Robert E. Potter, The Stream of American Education (New York: American Book Company, 1967), p. 473.

[5]I. L. Kandel, William Chandler Bagley Stalwart Educator (New York: Bureau of Publication, Columbia University, 1961), p. 2.

[6]William C. Bagley, Education, Crime, and Social Progress (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1931), p. x.

[7]William C. Bagley, "An Essentialist's Platform for the Advancement of American Education," Foundations of American Education, ed. James A. Johnson and others (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1969), pp. 363-364.

Bagley. In his book, Experience and Education, published in 1938, Dewey was critical of progressive educators' lack of emphasis on the sequential presentation of subject matter and also for their over-emphasis on child-centered experience as the basis for curriculum design.[8]

Bagley was not opposed to the idea of using the school as a vehicle to bring about social change which was the central idea of the reconstructionist theory of education. In 1926, Bagley, Counts, and Rugg, along with others wrote a paper called The Foundations of Curriculum-Making. The fourth section of the paper was entitled "The School as a Conscious Agency for Social Improvement." In this section of the paper Bagley agreed with the reconstructionist idea of Progress, that man could be the director of his own social evolution, and that the school curriculum should be designed to facilitate this idea in the minds of students.[9] Bagley's only qualifying statement regarding this document was that in early elementary education attention should be paid to the development of the fundamentals of learning and that the emphasis on social change should be reserved for the later stages of education.[10] But even in this qualifying statement Bagley emphasized the idea that social change and progress were dependent upon man's telic mind, and insisted that social progress depended upon man planning for the future from a sound rational and experimental base.[11]

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[8]John Dewey, Experience and Education (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1938), pp. 9-11.

[9]Harold Rugg and others, The Foundations of Curriculum-Making (Bloomington: Public School Publishing Company, 1926), p. 15.

[10]William C. Bagley, "Supplementary Statement," The Foundations of Curriculum-Making, Harold Rugg and others (Bloomington: Public School Publishing Company, 1926), pp. 29-40.

[11]Ibid., p. 31.

The essentialist theory of education was a blend of conservatism and progressivism. It emphasized the idea of preserving the best of the past, to be passed on to the present generation so that it could use this as a foundation upon which it could build and plan future social progress.[12]

## INTELLECTUAL ANTECEDENTS

### William Torrey Harris [1835-1909]

When William Torrey Harris first came to the midwest in 1858, he was employed in the city of St. Louis as a teacher of shorthand. His New England background allowed him to be influenced by the transcendental and Kantian philosophies of that region. While in St. Louis, Harris joined the Kant Society so he could continue the study of this philosophy. As a regular and participating member of this society, Harris became friendly with Henry C. Brockmeyer, a German iron-molder and adherent to the idealistic philosophy of Hegel.[13]

Through Brockmeyer, Harris was led to study the philosophy of Hegel and eventually became so influenced by Hegelianism that he left his Kantian learnings behind and became a professed Hegelian. Because of Brockmeyer's influence upon him and his conversion to Hegelianism, Harris said:

> Mr. Brockmeyer, whose acquaintance I had made in 1858, is, and was even at that time, a thinker of the same order of mind as Hegel, and before reading Hegel, except the few pages in Hedge's

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[12]James R. Bryner and Ralph L. Pounds, The School in American Society (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1973), p. 535.

[13]William H. Goetzmann (ed.), The American Hegelians (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1973), p. 3.

> German Prose Writers, had divined Hegel's chief ideas and the position of his system, and informed me on my first acquaintance with him in 1858 that Hegel was the great man among modern philosophers. . . . Mr. Brockmeyer's deep insights and his poetic power of setting them forth with symbols and imagery furnished me and my friends, of those early years, all of our outside stimulus. . . . He impressed us with the practicality of philosophy, inasmuch as he could flash into the questions of the day . . . the highest insight of philosophy and solve their problems. . . . We used it [Hegelian philosophy] to solve all problems connected with school-teaching and school management.[14]

Harris was influenced by a number of points in Hegelian philosophy. He was particularly impressed by Hegel's ideas that: (1) America was the land of the future where the relentless progress of freedom would have its next great emergence;[15] (2) that knowledge was a progressive series of buildings where the past was carried into the present, added to the present, and thereby continued to grow;[16] and (3) that man's mind was the spirit actualized and participated in the progressive development of the world by the refinement of rational knowledge.[17]

It was these last two points that Dewey also identified as positive aspects of Hegel's philosophy. They represented at least one source from which he developed his ideas on progress and education. In his essay, Pragmatism's Debt to Hegel, Dewey pointed to Hegel as the source that influenced his ideas on the progressiveness of knowledge and the practical application of philosophy to everyday affairs of human

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[14]William Torrey Harris, "Hegel's Logic," The American Hegelians, ed. William H. Goetzmann (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1973), pp. 73-74.

[15]Friedrich Hegel, "Lectures on the Philosophy of History," The American Hegelians, ed. William H. Goetzmann (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1973), pp. 19-20.

[16]William Torrey Harris, "The Philosophy of Education," The American Hegelians, ed. William H. Goetzmann (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1973), p. 302.

[17]Harris, "Hegel's Logic," op. cit., p. 71.

society.[18]

It was Harris, however, first as Superintendent of Schools in St. Louis, and later as United States Commissioner of Education, who applied the full breadth of Hegelian philosophy to education.[19] These Hegelian leanings led Harris to emphasize mental discipline and the formal training of the mind as means to enhance the progressive development of society.[20]

To Harris, the main function of the school was to develop in the student a respect for law and order. It was to help the student develop certain behavioral dispositions such as respect for authority, punctuality, and regularity. By this method the student was helped to grow; he learned to overcome his animal impulses and rise to a higher level of humanity.[21]

Once the school had accomplished this objective, it was to build on it by developing such characteristics in students as: (1) duty to self, defined as physical cleanliness and neatness; (2) self-culture, defined as intellectual growth; (3) industry, defined as dedication to hard work and improvement; (4) duty to others, defined as development of cooperative relationships; and (5) justice, defined as respect for

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[18]John Dewey, "Pragmatism's Debt to Hegel," The American Hegelians, ed. William H. Goetzmann (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1973), pp. 149-153.

[19]R. Freeman Butts and Lawrence A. Cremin, A History of Education in American Culture (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1953), p. 330.

[20]Ibid., p. 332.

[21]William T. Harris, "Moral Education in the Common Schools," Modern Philosophies of Education, ed. John Paul Strain (New York: Random House, 1971), p. 155.

others' rights and property. According to Harris, if the school concentrated upon developing these characteristics it would produce finer humans and consequently, a finer, more just, and democratic society. In this way the school was to function as a vehicle for social change, and individual as well as social progress was to be attained.[22]

Harris' educational ideas were based upon Hegel's concept of the idea of Progress and the function of the school. Progress was attained through education by the conscious and continued refinement of human behavior and rational knowledge. As these two characteristics were developed in individuals, the general status of society would be progressive and mankind would attain continuously higher levels of civilization.[23]

William C. Bagley [1874-1946]

In 1901, Bagley became the principal of an elementary school in St. Louis, where Harris was Superintendent of Schools. While Bagley learned the details of his job from his supervisors, the most lasting impression was left by the influence of Harris. It was not the Hegelian philosophy which Harris espoused that impressed Bagley, for he admitted that he did not understand it. It was, rather, Harris' concept of the dynamic value of a richly conceived and rigidly wrought system of fundamental principles as a foundation for education which influenced him most.[24]

Bagley defined his philosophical position when he published his book, Education and Emergent Man, in 1934. In this work Bagley turned

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[22]Ibid., pp. 156-157.

[23]Ibid., passim.

[24]Kandel, op. cit., p. 8.

to the philosophy of Emergent Evolution as the foundation upon which he built his educational theory.[25]

The philosophy of Emergent Evolution was first stated by Henri Bergson and later revised by C. Lloyd Morgan. This philosophy was rooted in Darwinism, but viewed evolution not as a mechanistic process but as a purposive, progressive, and ever creative process.[26] Morgan built upon the Bergsonian principle of man's mind being a new and creative occurrence in evolution:

> . . . on surveying the evolution of terrestrial life and mind there seems to have been advance through ascending modes of mentality to that highest example which is distinctive of man as rational and self-conscious.[27]

Bagley accepted the Bergsonian-Morganian principle of evolution and viewed the mind of man as a new evolutionary emergence that had the effect of making evolution conscious and therefore possible of determined direction. It was on this principle that Bagley built his educational theory. Bagley wrote:

> . . . education will be regarded as a primary factor in that progressive accumulation and refinement of learning which may be properly spoken of as social evolution. Since mankind is apparently the only animal species that is capable of accumulating and refining learnings and of transmitting them from generation to generation, education will be regarded as distinctly and uniquely a human prerogative. . . . Evolution is a progressive series of integrations which reveal a clear-cut discontinuity of qualities, properties, and in a certain sense of the term, functions.[28]

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[25]William C. Bagley, Education and Emergent Man (New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1934), p. 210.

[26]Mehdi Nakosteen, The History and Philosophy of Education (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1965), p. 616.

[27]C. Lloyd Morgan, "The Ascent of Mind," The Great Design: Order and Progress in Nature, ed. Frances Mason (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1934), p. 115.

[28]Bagley, Education and Emergent Man, op. cit., p. 1.

These philosophical principles led Bagley to conclude that man could become the master of his own destiny. But that this mastership depended upon the relative state of mental evolution in each individual as reflected in a collective fashion through society. The function of education, then, was to raise the mind of every individual. That would, in essence, raise the general mental level of society and lead to continued social progress.[29]

Michael Demiashkevich [1891-1938]

Demiashkevich's philosophic foundations were rooted in the Hegelian concept that society is an organic being that strives for harmony and growth. This philosophy was based on the idea that conflict existed in society because of individualistic, egoistic manifestations. The function of social institutions was to do away with this conflict, and to bring harmony to society. Once this harmony was established, social progress would be ensured. In relation to this Hegelian philosophy, and harmony in society, Demiashkevich said:

> Indeed, the meaning of the term social, as Hegel has clearly shown in his theory of the state, is only then employed in its true sense when it designates something relative to the common good, that is, to the good of all at the expense of all as over against the individual egotistical good of one at the expense of all.[30]

To Demiashkevich, the social institution best fitted to the task of the amelioration of conflict in society was the school. He contended that education could be used as a means to teach the individual to restrict his individual egoism and to develop a cooperative

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[29]Ibid., pp. 214-223.

[30]Michael Demiashkevich, An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education (New York: American Book Company, 1935), p. 362.

attitude that would facilitate social progress.[31] When deciding what type of educational philosophy would facilitate the concept of harmony and social progress, Demiashkevich turned to the works of Bergson and Bagley.[32]

It was Bergson's concept of duration that had the greatest influence upon Demiashkevich. To him, Bergson's durational idea that consciousness was an undivided continuity was the essence of reality. This implied to him that present reality was a synthesis and that if man was to understand the present, he had first to understand the past.[33]

Demiashkevich also accepted the Bergsonian principle that if man were to understand present reality it required of him personal effort. It took deep, concentrated thought and study for man to understand his present reality from the perspective of the durational concept. Man, however, because of the complexity of the present, could not retain all of the past. He had to select the best of the past and utilize it in order to interpret the present. This procedure, as Bergson pointed out, and Demiashkevich accepted, led to creative discontinuity. It was the combination of duration and creative discontinuity that led to progress. Man was to carry the best of the past into the present and use this amalgamation of past and present to solve social problems.[34]

> . . . there is little virtue in making studies harder than good systematic studies inevitably are as there would be in making people go long distances on foot and carry burdens on their back while there are means of motor transportation available. But it is of importance that pupils be duly impressed

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[31]Ibid., p. 363.

[32]Ibid., p. 235.

[33]Ibid., p. 150.

[34]Ibid., pp. 152-153.

> with the fact that the various devices facilitating our lives have come to be, not by playing ball or dancing . . . or otherwise idling, but by hard study and systematic application on the part of somebody. Something very important educationally is missed when school children are not shown--to continue our simile--that many people have worked very hard to build the means of transportation which make our locomotion an easy process.[35]

It was in Bagley's works on education, particularly his Education and Emergent Man, that Demiashkevich saw the synthesis of the Hegelian and Bergsonian philosophies. He believed that Bagley presented a sound philosophy of education that would facilitate social progress as it was defined in Hegel's social philosophy, and Bergson's synthesis of duration and creative discontinuity. To Demiashkevich, Bagley's essentialist theory of education was the kind of theory that would lead to the progressive development of civilization.[36]

## SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY

Bagley's social philosophy was based on three broad concepts. The first of these was that man could not accurately predict the problems that would face society in the future. The second was that America was headed toward what Bagley called a machine-slave civilization,[37] while the third was that the process of education was the preserving force that would lend durationalism to social change.[38]

### Social Change

Bagley argued that society went through periodic phases when social change was rapid and the direction that this change took was

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[35]Ibid., p. 154.

[36]Ibid., p. 147.

[37]Bagley, Education and Emergent Man, op. cit., p. 16.

[38]Ibid., p. 155.

unpredictable. He believed that the period in which he lived was just such a period. The industrial revolution had wrought great social change upon society. The era of the 1920's to the 1930's was a chaotic time of emergent and rapid social change. Man could not, because of the complexity and rapidness of this change, predict exactly which direction social change would take. Man, however, was not completely at the mercy of social evolution. He could, through the process of education, have an effect upon the direction that social change would take.[39]

The process of education, according to Bagley, could effect social change by passing on to the present generation those tried and true experiences of the past. The present generation, armed with a base of firm and tested knowledge, used this knowledge to solve present social problems. In relation to the stabilizing influence of education upon social change, Bagley said:

> A . . . function of education in eras of rapid change may be called a stabilizing function. The very time to avoid chaos in the schools is when something akin to chaos characterizes the social environment. The very time to emphasize in the schools the values that are relatively certain and stable is when the social environment is full of uncertainty and when standards are crumbling.[40]

It was by this method of preserving the best of the past and passing it on to the present generation that the school actually became a leader in the process of social change. Bagley contended that when the school changed in response to every social change it was not a leader but merely a follower.[41]

Machine-Slave Civilization

Bagley believed that the process of automation would drive

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[39]Ibid., pp. 119-126. [40]Ibid., p. 155. [41]Ibid.

America toward a machine-slave civilization in which the hours devoted to routine labor would be substantially reduced. He contended that this social movement subjected America to all of the problems that other slave-based civilizations had faced in the past.[42]

The main problems that the machine-slave civilization was generating were: (1) increased hours of leisure time that few Americans were prepared for, (2) over-emphasis on material production and consumption, and (3) over-emphasis on individualism. It was Bagley's contention that the continued development of these characteristics in American society were antithetical to social progress and would inevitably lead to social ruin.[43]

He believed, however, that the process of education could be used as a mechanism to change this pattern of social evolution and direct American society to a higher level of civilization.[44] The school was to educate people away from an emphasis on individualism and toward an emphasis upon cooperation. It had to prepare people to work in areas that could not be done by machines and to create in society a demand for the products of this type of work. This would require the school to emphasize the spiritual aspects of man's mental existence and to de-emphasize the consumption concept of materialism. The school was to emphasize the concept of pride in work so that people took pleasure in what they did, and were not overly concerned with what they could make, in relation to material profits, from their work.[45]

Bagley perceived that America during the 1930's was going through a complex and rapid period of social change. He believed that

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[42]Ibid., pp. 165-166.

[43]Ibid., pp. 165-171.

[44]Ibid., pp. 167-168.

[45]Ibid., pp. 167-174.

educators should take the lead and help direct this social change toward what he believed to be a higher level of civilization. It was his contention that education had to become a conserving factor during periods of chaos and pass on to the present generation the best of the past. By this method the good of the past could be applied to the present. That would help direct social evolution.[46]

Bagley argued that man could ill afford to lose these treasurers of the past, especially rational thought that had led to social progress. In relation to this and the importance of these ideas to his definition of the idea of Progress and social change, Bagley wrote:

> When one traces the evolution of man through the long ages that have elapsed since his emergence upon the human stage, one sees clearly the advantage of taking the Long View. The slow accumulation of human learnings, in spite of innumerable losses and innumerable setbacks, in spite of its present incompleteness, would seem to be even now the most significant series of happenings since life began. Man, the only animal species capable of being in any sense the "Master of his Destiny," has a far from perfect record in the use that he has made of this incomparable privilege.[47]

According to Bagley, Western industrialized civilization had over-emphasized the significance of material progress and was producing a machine-slave civilization based upon material consumption. It was time that educators awoke to this problem and emphasized in schools a different type of progress; one based on the elevation of the spiritual aspect of man rather than the material. It was by this method that education would become a vehicle for social change and contribute to the amelioration of the human condition.[48]

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[46]Ibid., pp. 123-131. [47]Ibid., p. 213.

[48]Bagley, Education and Emergent Man, p. 214.

## SOCIAL GOALS

Bagley believed that social progress could be measured statistically. Educators should use statistics generated from certain social barometers to determine the direction that school programs should take to facilitate social progress. In relation to this continuum, Bagley wrote:

> Social evolution . . . was defined as the accumulation and refinement of learnings, and education was defined . . . as a primary factor in social evolution, while as an organized social institution its chief responsibility is to transmit the spiritual heritage from generation to generation. It follows from our fundamental postulates that, in the selection of learnings to be perpetuated, . . . the criteria of selection should be the welfare and progress of society. The effectiveness of a system of universal education is to be measured, not primarily by the proportion of the population enrolled in the universal school, nor by the average daily attendance, nor by the proportion of those entering school who are retained to the higher levels. The fundamental criteria of the system's effectiveness are to be sought in those social statistics which inform us of the welfare of society whether it is progressing or standing still or going backward.[49]

Bagley enumerated twelve areas, or social goals, that educators should continue to monitor. These could be used in order to determine whether society made progress and what effect education had upon social progress. These twelve areas were (1) crime rates, (2) death rates and infant mortality rates, (3) political corruption, (4) venereal infection rates, (5) standard of living rates, (6) divorce rates, (7) the removal of slums, (8) consumption of solid literature, (9) creativity in art, literature, and science, (10) decreased exploitation of the weak, (11) decreased birth rates, and (12) an increase in cooperative spirit.[50]

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[49]Ibid., p. 119.

[50]Ibid., pp. 120-122.

Bagley argued that if crime rates, divorce rates, venereal infection rates, and political corruption rates went down as the consumption of literature, creativity, and cooperation went up, then society would progress. If, however, the reverse was true, then educators would have to conclude that society had not made progress and that some kind of change in the educational program would be required in order to facilitate progress.[51]

Bagley believed that the society of the 1930's was actually a mixture of progressive and antiprogressive elements. He concluded that crime rates were going up, divorce rates were going up, venereal disease rates were going up, political corruption was going up, but that there was at the same time an increase in the material standard of living, a decrease in the child mortality rate, and a moderate increase in the rate of solid literature consumed.[52]

He believed that the emphasis in American education on individuality, material progress, and general lowering of academic standards contributed to the rise in the antiprogressive social barometers. He further argued that educators could contribute to social progress by putting emphasis on the spiritual aspects of the school curriculum and the sequential presentation of time-tested subject matter.[53]

Bagley contended that his twelve social barometers were worthy social goals for educators to measure to determine whether society made progress or stood still or went backward. The results of these

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[51]Ibid., pp. 122-124.

[52]Ibid., p. 123.

[53]Ibid., pp. 123-131.

measurements were to be used by educators to adjust the school curriculum so that continued social progress was generated.[54]

## CURRICULUM THEORY

### William C. Bagley

Bagley saw two principal functions of the school curriculum in relation to his idea of social progress. The first was to build into the student certain habits and ideals of character that would make him a better person. The second was to provide the student with a fund of necessary knowledge, in facts and principles, selected to help him solve the problems of civilized life.[55]

### Habits and Ideals

Bagley maintained that one of the primary factors needed in order to build a better civilization was the repression of animal instinct and the building of moral character. He believed that the school should make this objective a basic part of its curriculum. The school could facilitate it by instilling in the student certain definite habits that would, when combined, emerge as human ideals.[56]

The habits that the school should seek to instill in the minds of students were (1) general cleanliness, (2) speaking courteously, (3) not speaking when others are speaking, (4) writing legibly, (5) taking off one's hat to elders, (6) giving precedence to women, (7)

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[54]Ibid., p. 122.

[55]William C. Bagley, Classroom Management (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1927), p. 226.

[56]Ibid.

standing erect, (8) working steadfastly at a task, (9) repressing the impulse to yawn or to strike, and (10) ". . . a hundred other impulses that nature never intended to be repressed, and yet the habitual repression of which is essential to civilized life."[57]

According to Bagley the ideals that would emerge if good habits were instilled were ". . . industry, accuracy, carefulness, steadfastness, patriotism, culture, cleanliness, truth, self-sacrifice, social service, and personal honor."[58] He maintained that when a society reflected these ideals it was in a progressive state of development and that educators could measure this progress by keeping a statistical record of the twelve social barometers he had listed under social goals.[59]

A Fund of Knowledge

Bagley believed that the subject matter portion of the curriculum should deal mainly with what he called the exacting fields of knowledge.[60] He defined these fields as mathematics and physical science, and argued that these fields of study contributed more to progress than any other.[61]

It was his contention that from mathematics and science, "If . . . then" inferences could be made, and that it was from making such inferences that man progressed. It was the study of mathematics and science that provided man with a durational foundation; carried from the past blended with the present, and used to solve social problems.[62]

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[57]Ibid., pp. 228-229. [58]Ibid., p. 227.

[59]Bagley, Education and Emergent Man, op. cit., pp. 123-132.

[60]Ibid., p. 159. [61]Ibid., p. 61. [62]Ibid., p. 156.

Bagley believed that this type of education, in the exact and exacting fields, should be made available to everyone and that it was not too difficult for any normally intelligent individual. Bagley wrote:

> Neither education nor psychology has sufficiently recognized the emergent qualities of the higher mental processes. Both have rather tacitly assumed a gradual transition from the concrete to the abstract, with the possibility always of working back from the abstract to the concrete, to the real, the objective, the tangible. As a matter of fact, and the scientific mind cannot be blind to fact, there comes a time in the mental development of every individual of sufficient mentality to understand the postulates of algebra, when so-called imaginary numbers, such as $\sqrt{-1}$ may become just as real as any "real" number.[63]

According to Bagley there was a place in education for the social studies such as history, geography, economics, and sociology but these studies were to play a secondary role to science and mathematics. He believed that the social sciences were good for providing a mental background, but that they should never replace the exact sciences, for these sciences provided the student with reliable knowledge from which he could build for the future.[64]

Bagley was not opposed to the inclusion of the project method or individualized learning in the curriculum. He felt that both these methodologies had a place in education but that they should not replace the sequential presentation of subject matter needed in order to build a common cultural base upon which American democracy depended for future progress.[65] Bagley contended that his curriculum theory with its mixture of personality dispositions and knowledge base was the best

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[63]Ibid., pp. 61-62. [64]Ibid., pp. 154-158.

[65]Bagley, Classroom Management, op. cit., p. 215.

theory for the progressive development of a broadly-based democratic society.[66]

Michael Demiashkevich

Demiashkevich agreed with Bagley's curriculum theory, but he disagreed with Bagley's concept of a broadly-based democratic society. He believed that the future progress of a democratic society depended upon the education of an elite group of leaders. He contended that the schools should provide a special type of education for the more intelligent members of society that would prepare them for leadership positions.[67] Demiashkevich wrote:

> The devastating result of the false, inflated version of the democratization of education, according to which post-elementary education should be given freely to all in non-selective public schools in non-classified groups, hazardously formed on the basis of the pupils' chronological age, is that it irresistibly degenerates into wasteful lowering of standards of education. The inevitable consequence of this would be the substantial, if not the statutory, abrogation of democracy itself and the establishment of the rule of demagogues and racketeers exploiting the actual, if not advertised, backwardness of the popular masses, fostered through the weakened public schools.[68]

Demiashkevich argued that history was made by individual great men and not by the masses of people.[69] He believed that the masses needed elite trained aristocrats to protect them against the loss of their rights and to see to it that society continued to progress.[70]

He identified two types of leadership: (1) the Agamemnonian, and (2) the Periclean. He defined the Agamemnonian leader as heroic,

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[66]Bagley, Education and Emergent Man, op. cit., pp. 210-223.

[67]Michael Demiashkevish, "Education for Leadership in a Democracy," Modern Philosophies of Education, ed. John Paul Strain (New York: Random House, 1971), p. 169.

[68]Ibid., p. 165. [69]Ibid., p. 163. [70]Ibid., p. 165.

impetuous, and knot-cutting while he defined the Periclean leader as reflective, urbanized, diplomatic, and knot-disentangling. Agamemnonian leadership was related to building nations while the frontier was still being conquered, but Periclean leadership was needed to run already established nations. According to Demiashkevich, it was the Periclean leadership that America now needed in order to continue to progress as an established nation.[71]

In relation to his idea of Progress, education, and leadership, Demiashkevich stated:

> . . . it seems that now, when Western empires have been built and the Agamemnonian period of Western civilization is closed, it is the task of the school in the Western world to contribute toward maintaining and perfecting the empires by increasing in the Periclean commonwealths social justice, prosperity, and happiness and diminishing the elements of disorder, discord, insecurity, and misery. This task cannot be fulfilled if the schools fail in . . . selection and training of Periclean leaders. . . .[72]

Essentially Demiashkevich agreed with the Bergsonian principle that future possibilities of emergent new directions were the outcome of unique minds, and that these unique potentialities were found in only a few members of any society. He further contended that only a liberal education, based on the best of the past carried into the present and applied to present social problems, was the means to continued progress.[73]

He emphasized that the education of future Periclean leaders should be based on the study of mathematics and science, for it was from these studies that they would get a foundation in exact knowledge.

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[71]Demiashkevich, An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education, op. cit., pp. 411-412.

[72]Ibid., p. 413.

[73]Ibid., p. 422.

But he also emphasized the importance of the study of the humanities, such as, literature, philosophy, social science, and art because it was from these studies that the future leaders would develop a foundation related to the concept of beauty upon which they could strive to build the more beautiful.[74]

Demiashkevich's curriculum theory was rooted in the idea of Progress. It was an idea of Progress based upon an aristocracy of the educated elite, for he believed that only superior, intelligent individuals could actually plan the progressive development of society and preserve a democratic state of being.[75]

## SUMMARY

The essentialist theory of education was based on the idea of Progress. The founders of this educational theory believed that man could be the director and planner of his own future evolution.

William Torrey Harris' theory of education was the precursor to the essentialist theory of education founded by William C. Bagley and Michael Demiashkevich in 1938. Harris based his theory of education on the philosophy of Hegel. He believed as did Hegel that progress was inevitable and that man participated in this progress by the refinement of rational thought and human behavior.

Bagley was influenced by Harris' ideas but based his educational theory on the philosophy of Emergent Evolution, first founded by Henri Bergson and later refined by C. Lloyd Morgan. The philosophy

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[74]Ibid., pp. 425-426.

[75]Demiashkevich, "Education for Leadership in a Democracy," op. cit., passim.

of Emergent Evolution was related to Hegelian philosophy in that it also contained the idea that progress was inevitable and that man participated in progressive development by bringing the past into the present, blended the two, and emerged new social possibilities. Michael Demiashkevich based his theory of education on the synthesis of Hegelian and Bergsonian philosophy. He looked to Bagley's curriculum theory as a foundation upon which he built his own theory of curriculum (Figure 10).

The essentialists believed that man could be the master of his own destiny. They believed, however, that man could not predict with certainty the future social problems that might face society. They, therefore, based their ideas of Progress on the need for man to preserve the best knowledge of the past and to use this knowledge in a creative way to solve contemporary problems.

Both Bagley and Demiashkevich based their curriculum theories on Harris' idea of refining human behavior and human thought. They believed that by this process of refinement man would continue to rise to higher levels of spiritual existence. Bagley emphasized the subjects of mathematics and science as being the most important subjects in a school curriculum. He believed that these subjects would give students exact knowledge and that this knowledge could be used to solve problems that would lead to progress. Bagley believed that all students should study these subjects and that the general diffusion of exact knowledge would ensure the survival of democracy.

Demiashkevich agreed with Bagley's basic curriculum design, but thought democracy could best be preserved by the education of an intellectual elite. He, like Bagley, emphasized mathematics and science as

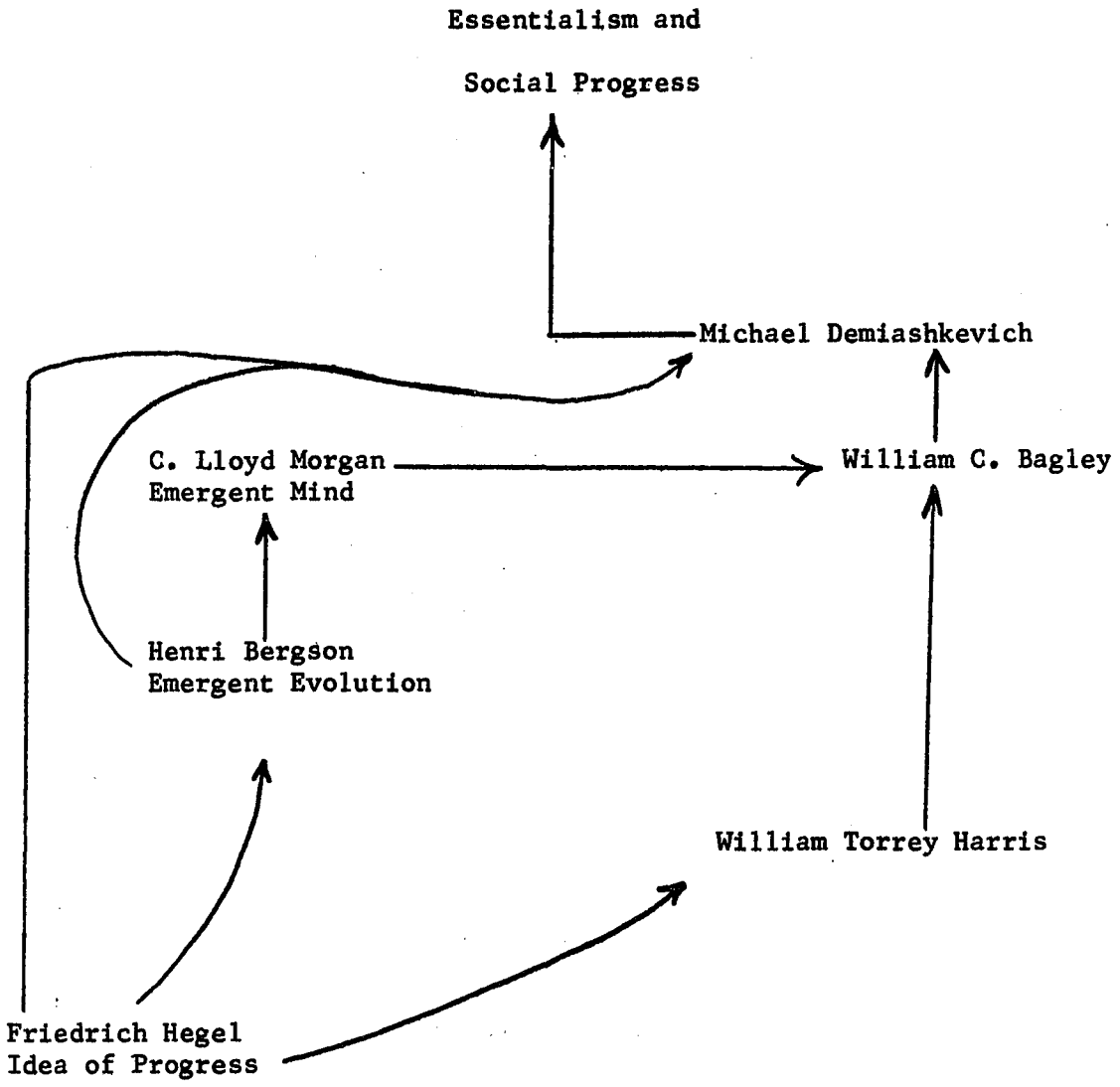


Figure 10

Intellectual Antecedents of the Essentialist Theory of Education

important subjects in the curriculum but gave a higher place to the social sciences than did Bagley. The essentialist curriculum theory was based on the idea that man must preserve the best of the past, blend the past with the present, and then use the blend to solve present problems. They believed that this process would lead to continued social progress.

# Chapter 7

# SUMMARY, FINDINGS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## SUMMARY

This study was made in an effort to determine whether the idea of Progress, which developed during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, influenced the origins and curriculum theories of the educational philosophies of Experimentalism, Essentialism, and Reconstructionism. Further effort was made to explore the related sub-problems of (1) whether the intellectual antecedents of the founders of the three educational philosophies were related, (2) whether there was any relationship in the social philosophies advocated by the founders of these educational philosophies, (3) whether the social goals advanced by the founders were related, and (4) whether the founders viewed education and the school curriculum as the means to continued social progress.

The study was limited to the history of the development of the idea of Progress in Western thought during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and to ways in which this idea influenced the development of the twentieth century educational philosophies and curriculum theories under study herein. The writer assumed (1) that the idea of Progress was the foundational concept on which the educational philosophies were built, (2) that because the idea of Progress was a central concept in

each of these educational philosophies the related social philosophies and goals were similar, and (3) that each of the curriculum theories that grew out of these educational philosophies was designed to perpetuate the idea of Progress, defined as man being the director of his own social evolution.

## FINDINGS

1. Prior to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, philosophy was dominated by three major concepts: (1) society was a degeneration from a past golden age; (2) that fate, the Greek concept of Moira, directed the future of man; and (3) the idea of Providence, defined as the belief that history and cultural evolution were directed by the mind of God. These three concepts were diametrically opposed to the idea of Progress.

2. The rise of scientific thought, based on Baconianism, led to the development of the idea of Progress. It was not until the nineteenth century, however, that the idea of Progress became a dominant theme in the philosophies of that time; metaphysical Idealism and Positivism, primarily as postulated by such men as Friedrich Hegel, Auguste Comte, Henri Bergson, and Lester F. Ward.

3. In the early twentieth century, John Dewey blended elements of Idealism, represented by Hegel, with elements of Positivism, represented by Bacon, Comte, Darwin, and Ward and founded the educational philosophy of Experimentalism. He represented man as the molder of his own future and advocated a social philosophy based on the use of the scientific method and a cooperative social association to be directed toward the goals of progressive democracy, amelioration of

the human condition, and continued social growth. The philosophy of Experimentalism incorporated the idea of Progress as one of its central elements.

Dewey advocated a curriculum theory based on his social philosophy and social goals. The central themes of his theory were (1) man was a progressive species, (2) man possessed a telic mind and could plan the future, and (3) that the use of the scientific method was the means by which man could build a better world. Dewey's curriculum theory was designed to help mankind become conscious of the fact that progress could be made and sustained by human effort.

4. The founders of the philosophy of Reconstructionism, George Counts, Harold Rugg, and Theodore Brameld, rooted their philosophy in Dewey's Experimentalism. They, like Dewey, portrayed man as the molder of his own future and developed a social philosophy based on the use of the scientific method and a cooperative attitude to build a more democratic and cooperative world. As a social goal they advocated the use of man's telic mind to plan the continued amelioration of the human condition. Here again the idea of Progress was central. Both reconstructionists and experimentalists teach man to plan his destiny.

The philosophers identified as the antecedents of the reconstructionists were Bacon, Hegel, Darwin, and Ward. These were supplemented by the addition of the social goals notion of Edward Bellamy. This led the reconstructionists to criticize Dewey for not stating concrete goals and openly advocating a collectivist society.

Each of the reconstructionist philosophers advocated a curriculum theory based on the idea of Progress. Like Dewey they saw

the school and its curriculum as the means to perpetuate the concept that man could be the director of his own social evolution. Definite goals rooted in contemporary social problems were basic to the whole idea of curriculum development.

5. The idea of Progress, through the uses of science and social cooperation as means to build a more democratic society, was advocated by William C. Bagley and Michael Demiashkevich the founders of the essentialist philosophy of education. Like the experimentalists and reconstructionists, the essentialists argued that man had a telic mind and could direct and plan his own social evolution. The difference was that the essentialists depended more on metaphysical Idealism as the foundation for their philosophic thought than did the experimentalists or reconstructionists. They relied heavily upon the thought of Henri Bergson but in common with the other educational philosophers they identified both Hegel and Darwin among their intellectual antecedents (Figure 11).

Essentialists advocated the use of the school and its curriculum as a means to perpetuate the concept that man could be the director of his own social evolution. They advocated a curriculum whereby the best of the past was carried into the present, blended with the present, and used by the present generation to solve social problems associated with the amelioration of social conditions.

A central idea in each philosophy was the use of the school, and the structuring of the curriculum so that the idea of Progress would be continuously perpetuated in society. The idea of Progress was a foundational concept in the educational philosophies of Experimentalism, Essentialism, and Reconstructionism. The social

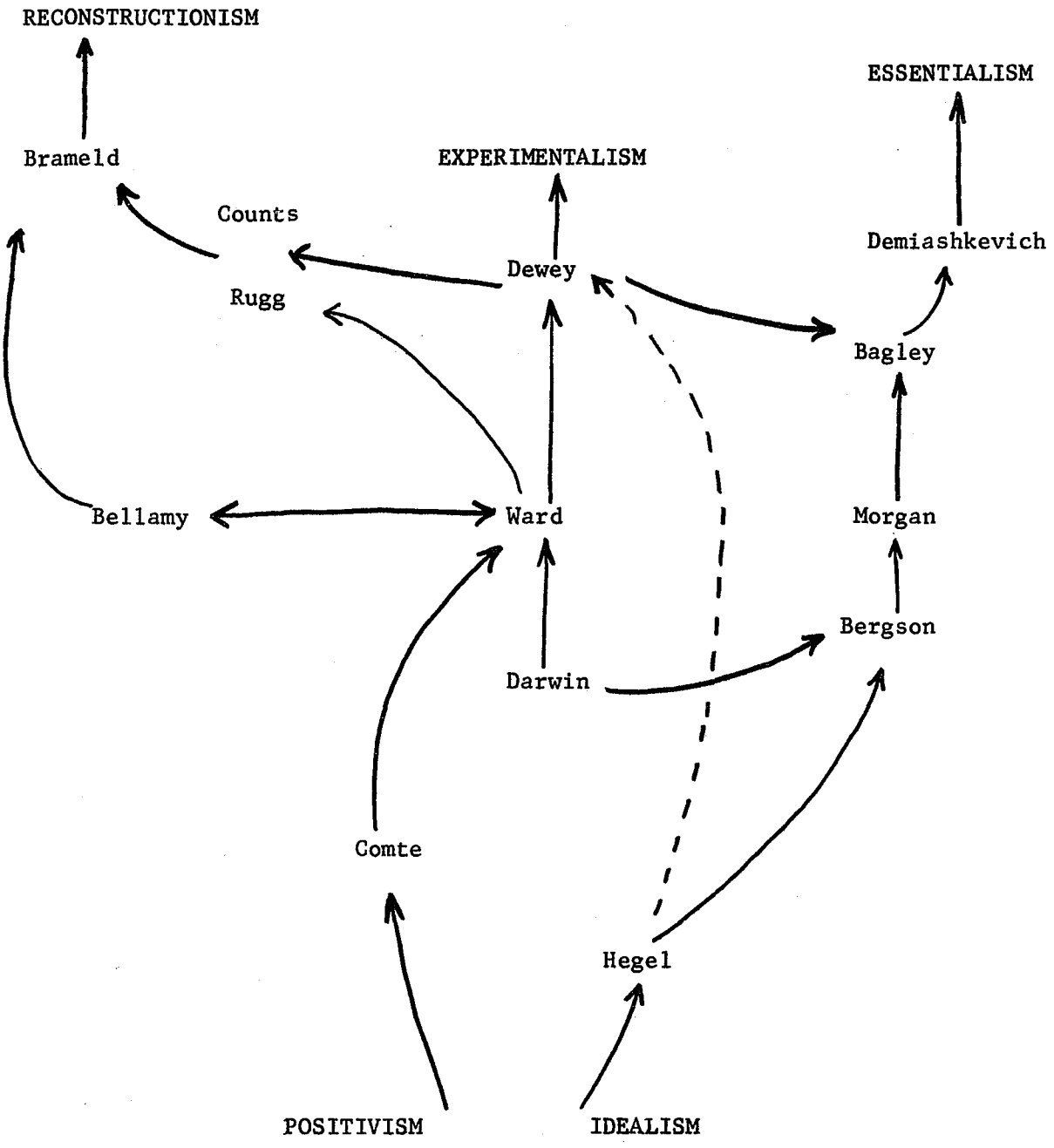


Figure 11

The Idea of Progress and the Intellectual Antecedents of the Founders of Experimentalism, Essentialism, and Reconstructionism

philosophies associated with each of these schools of thought were similar. Each philosopher portrayed man as the molder of his own future and advocated the planned direction of society toward the continued amelioration of human life.

## IMPLICATIONS

1. There are more similarities in the educational philosophies of Experimentalism, Essentialism, and Reconstructionism than secondary works in history and philosophy of education indicate. These secondary works magnified the differences in thought, and neglected to emphasize the similarity of thought that was present in these three philosophies built upon the central and common idea of Progress. The differences that are apparent in these philosophies are more a difference in educational means than in social ends to be sought.

2. In each of these American educational philosophies there is a continuum of thought from metaphysics to social philosophy to curriculum theory. They indicate that curriculum theory cannot be separated from social philosophy. These philosophies imply that supervisors, whose main role is to help facilitate learning and develop curriculum, should be well educated in social philosophy and develop a planned social purpose related to curricular changes. Supervisors should be well grounded in history, philosophy, and social philosophy before they attempt to develop curriculum.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The curriculum theories explored in this study were the major curriculum theories advocated by educators during the half

century preceding the 1960's. Research should be conducted on actual public school curricula that were in use between 1900 and 1960 to determine which theory actually had the greatest effect upon American education.

2. Research should be conducted in the area of Process-Structure philosophy, as it was expressed by Alfred N. Whitehead and Jerome Bruner, which became popular after 1960, to indicate whether this philosophy of education represents an amalgamation of the three philosophies explored in this study. Particular emphasis should be directed toward determining whether this philosophy continued the tradition of the idea of Progress in American curriculum theory.

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